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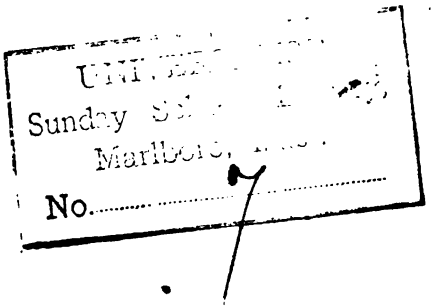


# THIRTY SHORT SERMONS.

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# THIRTY

# SHORT SERMONS,

ON

## VARIOUS IMPORTANT SUBJECTS,

BOTH

## DOCTRINAL AND PRACTICAL.

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By JOHN BOVEE DODS,
PASTOR OF THE UNIVERSALIST SOCIETY IN PROVINCETOWN, MASS.

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BOSTON:
PUBLISHED BY THOMAS WHITTEMORE,
No. 37 Cornhill.

1840.

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# DEDICATION.

To Mr. C. S. Morris,
G. C. Marchant, M. D.,
S. S. Griffin, M. D.,
Robert Anderson, Esq., and
Mr. George L. Lumsden.

Gentlemen: — In former days, it has been my pleasing task to preach the doctrine of universal grace and salvation in the States of Virginia and North Carolina, and particularly in your several sections, where it was never before proclaimed. I have enjoyed the pleasing satisfaction of responding with these feeble organs to the tidings of angels, "Peace on earth, good will toward men." These tidings, echoed by the lips of Murray and Ballou, have broken the midnight darkness of the doctrine of endless vengeance and woe, and dispersed the threatening clouds and tempests which had too long obscured the light shining from heaven, and tens of thousands are now basking and rejoicing in its healing beams. "The day is broke, which never more shall close." In your sections, too, the light and glory of the Lord shines on the bright sky of mind,

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and many can say with transporting rapture, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men"!

To you, gentlemen, I am peculiarly indebted for your kindness in sustaining me, in the midst of opposition and trial, and for that courtesy, hospitality, and fraternal regard, which have been so warmly and generously tendered to me by yourselves and your amiable families. In return for all these things, accept my grateful thanks. The history of your kindness I have often rehearsed to my children, and the remembrance of it shall go down with them to their graves. And believe me, that the whole will be held in grateful recollection by this heart till it shall cease to throb.

For all your favors to me, and for all that you have done for our cause, I can only render this tribute of sincere and grateful recognition, and dedicate this humble VOLUME to you, fervently praying that it may do good in the world.

Fraternally yours forever,

J. B. DODS.

JUNE 1st, 1840.

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# PREFACE.

EIGHT years ago was published, at the "Trumpet" office, a small volume, entitled "*Twenty-four Short Sermons, on the Doctrine of Universal Salvation.*" I wrote them originally for the "Trumpet," and, being much straitened for the want of sufficient time to bestow upon them, there are evident marks of carelessness in several instances, both in expression and arrangement. Twenty of those sermons I have embodied in this volume with little or no alteration, except a few typographical errors. The work was urgently called for by my friends, and I had no time to rewrite it.

I am aware, that my views upon the New Birth differ from those of others, and, in one instance, have been publicly attacked. But, after prayerful reflection upon the

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subject, and a careful examination of the expositions of others, I must still remain satisfied of the correctness of my views, until new light shall be shed upon this subject. I fully believe with my brethren, so far as they go, in their explanations of the New Birth. I agree with them in the present change, which takes place through faith; and agree with them, that this faith introduces the believer into the *present* enjoyment of the kingdom of heaven here on earth. Notwithstanding this, yet I am unable to see how a man can be born again, in this sense, without faith in the resurrection of the dead. If it be admitted, that he cannot, then certainly all the new birth he can experience in this mortal life, is only in faith in anticipation, and not in reality. In the same sense he now passes from death unto life through faith, and through faith he now enjoys eternal life.

I have thought proper to dedicate this humble work to Mr. Christopher S. Morris, Dr. Marchant, Dr. Griffin, Robert Anderson, Esq., and Mr. George L. Lumsden. It is a duty of respect I owe them for former

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kindnesses, and which this tribute of sincere gratitude but poorly repays.

Mr. C. S. MORRIS, of Gloucester County, Virginia, was the first in that section who took me by the hand in 1831, when opposition against me and my sentiment was most virulent and untiring. He is a gentleman of high respectability, and has continued to this day, the unswerving friend of our cause.

Dr. G. C. MARCHANT, of Indiantown, North Carolina, has long been a believer in Universal Salvation, and has done much for our cause in the section where he lives. I have spent many happy moments in his society, and often look back upon them with pleasure. He is a respectable gentleman, and one in whom our friends may repose entire confidence.

Dr. S. S. GRIFFIN, of Williamsburg city, Virginia, and also ROBERT ANDERSON, Esq., of the same place, and Mayor of that city, extended to me the same hospitality and kindness, and sustained me when our sentiment there was very unpopular. They are gentlemen who hold the first rank in



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the esteem of those to whom they are best known, and are the uncompromising friends and advocates of equal rights and liberal Christianity.

Mr. GEORGE L. LUMSDEN, of Petersburg city, Virginia, is a respectable gentleman, who long stood firm in the belief of endless punishment, and not until lately has he renounced that sentiment, and avowed his belief publicly in the doctrine of Universal Salvation. This change of sentiment he attributes to the reading of my "Twenty-four Short Sermons," and it is principally through his urging their republication, that I have been induced to present the volume, in this enlarged and improved form, to the public.

J. B. DODS.

JUNE 1st, 1840.

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☞ The public may expect another volume from my humble pen, the present summer, entitled "THE CROWN OF LIFE," containing sentiments in theology not yet advanced by other writers.

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# THIRTY SHORT SERMONS.

## SERMON I.*

### THE BITTERNESS OF DEATH.

"Surely the bitterness of death is past." 1 SAM. XV. 32.

AN army of more than two hundred thousand men marched under Saul, king of Israel, against Agag, king of the Amalekites, and slaughtered every individual in his kingdom, and took him prisoner. It was, in the strict sense of the word, a war of extermination. Old and young, and great and small, were swept to the grave in the tempest of battle. Agag alone was left alive. Among the slain, his dearest friends and connexions were numbered, so that there was not a solitary being left, to whom he was bound by the ties of consanguinity. His government was demolished, his subjects were consigned to one common tomb, and the glory and grandeur of his kingdom were eclipsed forever! Stripped of all

* Delivered in the Universalist Church in Provincetown, Mass., by the pastor, Sunday, Nov. 17th, 1839, on the death of CHARLES COLLINS PARKER.



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his regal splendor, and solitary and pensive on earth, he was brought a prisoner to Jerusalem. As he was led forward to the spot of execution, and gazed upon the fatal axe by which he was to be cloven down, he exclaimed, in the words of our text, "*Surely the bitterness of death is past.*"

Life, being the highest, the dearest gift of the munificent Creator, is consequently, when enshrined in virtue, the greatest possible blessing to the creature; and, in competition with it, all other blessings dwindle into insignificance and nothingness. It is that proud boon of inconceivable worth, which stamps, at once, all other blessings with value. It is the breathing spirit of the Almighty animating an organized frame, and conferring delight. As life is therefore *sweet*, so death, its opposite, is *bitter*. And as death tears us from all that we love and fondly cherish on earth, — tears us from our homes and kindred, — from the embrace of parents, friends, and children, — from the glories of nature and the dear light of mortal life, — so it has been, with the soundest propriety, styled the "king of terrors."

But sweet as is life, and terrible and bitter as is death, yet such a combination of circumstances may transpire, as in the case of Agag, as shall not only overpower life, but remove the bitterness of death, and force us to let go our eager

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grasp on the world. When, by any train of providential events or of unforeseen misfortunes, our earthly hopes are blasted and our brightest expectations and prospects are darkened, — if the clouds of adversity lower and thicken around our heads, and obscure and darken our bright mental sky ; — if those, whom we loved, and by whom we were beloved, are gone, we are then often weaned from the objects of this momentary being, and, in view of the accumulated woes that surround us, we can exclaim, — " Surely the bitterness of death is past," even before we feel its icy hand. The moment that all the pleasures of life are overbalanced by pain and distress, either of body or mind, with no cherished hope of relief, we then gladly resign ourselves to death, and seek repose in its solemn shroud. This was the case with Agag, who, being a heathen, entertained no hope of a future existence through a resurrection in Christ. The bitterness of death was past to him, because all the joys of his existence were overpowered by distress.

Human life is a momentary dream ; an empty shade. Like as the lightning, which writes its fiery path on the dark cloud and expires, so human existence is but a meteor's blaze. It is often bright and dazzling in its momentary course, is attended with many delights, but, like the lightning's flash, expires in the darkness of death.

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We come into existence ignorant and helpless. The first idea of which we have any distinct remembrance is, that we were encircled by a mother's arm, and hung upon a mother's smile. In her society, with those toys and playthings she gave us, was created our first little world. There we received our first impressions of those pleasurable delights of which our natures are so susceptible. From that dear twilight of our being we pass on to youth, — hence to manhood and age; and in every period we find those enjoyments, which the hand of Heaven has sown in the whole path of mortal life, from infancy to age, and so varied those enjoyments as exactly to adapt them to each season and period of our present existence. But perhaps the happiest, as well as the most interesting, period of human life is the bloom of youth, when just ripening into manhood. Then the bones are moistened with marrow. The crimson current of life flows full, free, and warm, in its destined channels. The heart beats high with dearest hopes of earthly bliss, and the cheeks are mantled with living smiles. The step is firm and elastic, and through the lustre of the eye beams the ripening genius of the soul. Crime has not yet stained the hands, nor guilt polluted the fountains, of the heart. It is a stranger to disappointment and woe. Nothing but fairy dreams of bliss linger in its inmost recesses. The world

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seems a realm, whose tranquil serenity was never disturbed by adverse storms of suffering and pain; nor its sky overcast by clouds and darkness of affliction, distress, and gloom.

Not only the world shines an Eden filled with flowers of perennial bloom, but his associates and companions seem angels, ministering to his delight. Wherever he goes, fond dreams of happiness spring up in his imagination. Fair forms of pleasure seem to dance in his path, and the silken charms of affection cluster around his heart, and in ten thousand strings of purest love bind him to his dear sisters, brothers, and to the social companions of his early life forever. Here all is sunshine, — all is joy, — all is a bright mid-day dream. Here then the mind clings to life, with all the burning ardor of youthful fire, and naturally shudders at the thought of death.

And is it possible that a blooming youth, in the full possession of all these enjoyments, could be brought, not only to resign the whole, but to soar so far in moral and intellectual grandeur, — and to feel so deeply resigned to God, — and attain such a manly conquest over the tomb, as to realize the weight of our text, — "Surely the bitterness of death is past"? I answer *yes; it is even so.* And brother Parker, whose death we deplore, is the youth, who has left the stage of action under such circumstances of magnanimous triumph. And

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what, it may be asked, removed from him the bitterness of death, and gave him victory? In answer to this question, I would first reply *negatively*, that it was not the loss of all those whom he held dear on earth, as in the case of Agag. No, — his existence was not poisoned, the sky of his mortal life was not obscured, and the innocent pleasures and enjoyments of his youth were not blighted forever in the destruction of his kindred and friends. He was not left solitary and pensive on earth. No, — he had kind brothers, who were dear to his heart. He had most amiable and affectionate sisters, who were the light of his abode, and a tender mother, who, to the last throbbing pulse of life, stood by his couch of pain, and administered to his wants. Nor was he brought to surmount and triumph over the bitterness of death by the pains of a wasting consumption, overpowering the pleasures and enjoyments of life. No, — long before his disease had made any advances, — while he was yet in his usual health and happiness, he often mentioned to me that death to him had no terrors, — on that subject his mind was at rest.

The question then returns, what was it that removed the bitterness of death from the mind of this young man, in the very bloom of youth, with all its fairy hopes and sunny smiles resting upon his head? I answer, that it was the power of his

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gospel faith and hope in the promise of God, revealed in the immeasurable plan of mediatorial grace through Jesus Christ, the Saviour of the world. He was born under the doctrine of endless torment, and, for the first twelve years of his life, he was taught this unhappy sentiment, which has, for three centuries, been pouring its streams of torment on the Christian world, more bitter than wormwood and gall. Here his reason found no rock on which to build, nor his meek spirit any place of rest. He listened to the tidings of angels, peace on earth and good will to men, abandoned the sentiment of endless torment, and embraced that of Universal Salvation. This removed the bitterness of death, and gave him a firm, Christian triumph over the tomb. His spotless life gave him not only a pure, unsullied conscience, but also the sweet rewards of heavenly peace ; while his faith and hope enabled him to resign the world, with all those fond and smiling attractions it presents to the youthful mind, and completely removed the bitterness of death.

As before remarked, he had resigned the sentiment of unending woe, and listened to the immortal song of angels, sweetly stealing on the midnight hour, and breaking the silence which slumbered on Judea's plain. By an eye of faith he had seen the light from heaven illuminating the dark concave with a blaze of glory, and shep-

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herds gazing entranced upon the surpassing splendor of the scene, displayed from eternity; and listening to the immortal shout, — "Glory to God in the highest, on earth peace, good will to men." By an eye of faith, he had seen the Saviour, passing from his helpless condition in a manger, onward to that power when he stilled the elements and awoke the dead, — passing from a manger to a cross; from the songs of angels to the curses and mockeries of men, and from crowns of thorns to crowns of glory! He had heard him reveal the destiny of man, and expatiate on the paternal character of God. He had heard him bequeath the strange *gift* of God, — *eternal life*, — to a dying world, in the holy and immortal nature of angels. In this nature he declared, as the Son of God, that they should be confirmed, through a resurrection, into future scenes of changeless and unending beatitude in heaven. There, by the power of God, they should be made equal unto the angels, and be the children of God, being the children of the resurrection. He saw him manifest the divine perfections of his Father to the world, in living the precepts he taught, and not by resisting evil, but in returning good for evil. He saw him manifest all the great and brilliant virtues of his character on the cross, in triumphing over the bitterness of death, in its most aggravated forms. At

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the grandeur of the scene, he saw the sun withdrawing his light and sleeping, as it were, in the drapery of his own clouds, and darkness solemnly gathering around his cross! He heard the earthquake rumbling its thunders, — convulsing the globe, — saw the rocks rending, the graves opening, and the dead arising! He saw nature in majesty and terror hovering around his cross, and there bringing to a centre all that is grand, sublime, and awful in her realms, as the magnanimous sufferer expired.

All this by an eye of faith he beheld. He beheld God's everlasting Son laid in the tomb. Thence he arose, as the first-fruits of the human harvest, and entered beyond its darkness and gloom into the undying light of eternity. By an eye of faith, he beheld the great Mediator enthroned, and pledged to reign until all things in heaven and earth shall be subdued to him, and God shall be all in all. He firmly believed the resurrection in Christ to be our only hope of a future world. He cherished the faith, that, since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. He cherished the faith, that as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive, and in *him* bear the image of the heavenly, as in Adam they once bore the image of the earthy. In fine, he believed that we should be raised in an incorruptible, glorious,

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powerful, spiritual body, and that all human kind, congregated beyond the reach of death and pain, should together shout, "O death! where is thy sting? O grave! where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law; but thanks be to God, who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

Because Christ lived he believed we should live also. From this world of suffering, imperfection, and change, he looked forward, as he lay upon his dying bed, to the cloudless resurrection world, from whence Christ, the bright angel of eternal truth and life, arrayed in robes of heaven, shall descend, approach, and stand before the tomb! — shall smite the solemn house of silence! The cerements of the dead shall burst! The solid doors of the cold prison of earth give way! The fetters riveted by the hammer of death shall fall! And at the sound of his inspiring voice, the dead shall rise; and redeemed captives, from sin and death and pain forever free, shall triumph in immortal existence.

He saw this, and the bitterness of death was past. In faith, he saw the resurrection state, where glorified millions walk the fair banks of crystal streams, and bathe in living fountains. There he saw no cheeks suffused with tears; nor did sighs of parting friendship rise from bleeding hearts. The parent's fondest wish was realized,

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and love and friendship reigned unbroken and perpetual. To him the bitterness of death was past; and in the enjoyment of this sublime faith and hope, and with the peace of heaven in his soul, he fell asleep. He is now in heaven.

I am well aware, that it will now be said by the objector, that it cannot be that the faith and hope of this lamented youth, so completely removed the bitterness of death; because, that the believer in endless misery, having an unshaken faith in that sentiment, may also exclaim "Surely the bitterness of death is past." This I deny; for no man ever has drawn, nor can draw, any consolation from his faith in the doctrine of unending torment. Nor can such a wretched faith resign him to God, — nor enable him to rejoice and triumph over the bitterness of death. Such a believer draws all his consolation from the salvation part of his doctrine, and this alone enables him to rejoice and triumph over the bitterness of death. While on the other hand, faith in the wretched sentiment of undying pain, fans up a flame of misery in the bosom, which the most exalted anticipations of future glory are unable to quench. Nothing that heaven can give, can crush the hydra woe this deplorable doctrine creates and fosters in the soul. It is at war with all that is benignant and holy in God, angels, and men. It claims a pretended and sovereign right to stand

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the test of justice, at some final day, before the compassionate Redeemer of the world, and legally demand its subjects of torture. This doctrine contends, that a fallen angel will wrest them from his once bleeding, but now glorified hand at the very threshold of eternity; — there tear the human family in pieces by separation, — sunder the most endearing affections Heaven ever rooted in the soul, — set at defiance every devout aspiration ever breathed to heaven for the salvation of the world, and thus mock at the fondest desire of the Christian bosom. And does this remove the bitterness of death? No! This doctrine claims a pretended right to crush to atoms every parental hope, by claiming victims out of every family, or circle of relatives and friends, and to change the warm current of Christian love and compassion into stoic apathy in every celestial bosom. All heaven thus hardened, and prepared to feast at the sight of consummate misery, this fallen angel, having every fibre of his infernal, malignant heart gratified, will then descend triumphant with countless millions of all ages, — from the little child, that could but just discern between good and evil, up to him who dropped in death under the weight of years, — with this unnumbered throng he will descend to the infernal regions of black despair, while those in heaven shout, — "glory!" exulting in ruin, destruc-

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tion, and pain! Immortal God! is this the spirit of heaven, that triumphs over the bitterness of death? No! All that we call benevolent here, starts with horror at the shocking scene!

The anticipation of eternal pain fills every Christian bosom with mourning and gloom, and is destructive of every joy. In prospect of this unheavenly sentiment, many a father, — many a mother, have been stripped of every consolation, and brought down with sorrow to the grave. We often behold parents, who have consigned an only son to the tomb. With the most painful emotions they scan even the virtuous life of their child. They reflect upon his moral worth, which endeared him to all. They trace him through the scenes of his boyhood and youth. They mark the sweetness of his disposition, — his veneration to his parents, — and his cheerfulness and innocency among his playmates. Nor do they stop here. They trace their lovely boy up to manhood, and from that to his dying day. They contemplate the brilliancy of his mind, and that noble rank of respectability he ever maintained. Having diligently investigated his conduct through life and found no stain, they pursue him in thought to eternity, and with rending anguish of soul pronounce him in the abodes of the damned, because he met with no mysterious change this side the grave! And is this a sentiment, that removes

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the bitterness of death, and fills the soul with peace and joy? No! Why all this anxiety and woe among Christians? Alas! their bleeding hearts will tell you why. Their teachers, instead of comforting their hearts with the glad tidings of that great joy, which shall be unto all people, have torn them open with the thunderbolts of unending damnation! They will point you, with a brimful eye, to the green sward that covers the father, the mother, the child, the husband, the wife or friend they loved, while unknown terrors chill the soul. Instead of removing the bitterness of death, what awful consequences the doctrine of never-ending woe involves. That we may fully see the boasted comfort this unrighteous sentiment gives, from the anticipation let us turn to the supposed reality. Those children, who have been torn from your society by death, are yet embraced in the circle of your well-wishes and love. Imagination often places their loved forms before your eyes, and hears the sweet sound of their voices yet falling with melancholy music on your ear. We will suppose them involved in endless misery, while you have arisen to worlds of light in heaven. Now look down and see them eternally fixed in the most excruciating pain. There, oh father and mother, are the once sportive children of your arms! There see the miserable objects of all your toils, your affections,

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your tears, your desires, and prayers! Do you feel no anxiety for their welfare; and do no clouds of trouble rise to darken your light in glory? Parents, will you sit on your celestial height, unmoved at the pains and groans of your own suffering offspring? — or at the groans of suffering millions, and not feel one yearning of compassion over their unhappy fate? If so, I shall not envy you your seat. You may keep it. It would be no heaven to me. God grant, that this bosom may never feel one aspiring wish to such an abode.

And is this the doctrine, that gives you joy and triumph over the bitterness of death? If so, I entreat you once more, by all the ties that bind man to man, — by those of kindred blood and parental love, — by the love of God and the voice of Christ, — by all the bowels of mercy in time and in eternity, that can be made to move at woe, — I entreat you to look down once more to flaming worlds! There perhaps is a friend, who in this life was your benefactor. He saw you in distress and he flew to your relief. He saw you on a bed of pain, and with a hand of compassion kindly supported your aching head, and whispered the accents of encouragement and consolation. The hand that administered to your relief and fed the poor is now frying in flames, and the voice that spoke you comfort is venting the

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groans of despair! Where, oh! where, has your mercy fled? Where are those religious feelings you experienced on earth and which prompted you to love your enemies, and to succor the distressed? Where has your Christian benevolence fled? Are you changed, hardened, and insensible to that moral flow of feeling, which we call the true spirit of religion here? If so, then we are now completely ignorant of the nature of that spirit which warms the bosoms of the glorified in heaven, and all the religious exercises we experience on these mortal shores are but so many deceptions, received through the medium of the senses. But grant them to be the breathings of the same spirit which burns in the just made perfect, and the sight of endless misery would unparadise the realms of glory and paralyze the heavenly song of redemption. This infernal grandeur of woe, which in the sublime of terror infinitely transcends the lightning's blaze, can never remove the bitterness of death, but on the contrary gives it all its chilling horrors.

We have now clearly shown, that the doctrine of endless misery can, in no sense, sustain the soul in the hour of death; and have clearly pointed out, that in our young lamented friend it was the sentiment of universal grace, that brought consolation and joy, and removed the bitterness of death. He was an amiable young man, for whom

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I cherished a deep affection, and our last farewell was painful and trying. But the dear youth is gone; and with triumphant composure did he leave us, exhorting his equal-aged companions to live to God. Never more on earth shall we hear his well-remembered voice. But mourning mother, sisters, brothers, and friends, let us be comforted in the pleasing hope, that we shall meet him again beyond the storms of this ever-changing life! Yes, we shall meet him in heaven, and hear his loved voice sound immortal, where death and parting shall be known no more. Let us live in accordance with the faith we profess; and cherish in our hearts the spirit of universal benevolence, so that, when we shall be called from these mortal shores, we may not only feel that the bitterness of death is past, but be enabled to breathe out in resignation, —

"'T is This life 's a dream, an empty show,
But the bright world to which I go
Hath joys substantial and sincere,
When shall I wake and find me there?

O, glorious hour! O, blest abode!
I shall be near and like my God;
And flesh and sin no more control
The sacred pleasures of the soul."



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## SERMON II.*

### ON THE DEATH OF MRS. MORRIS.

MELANCHOLY indeed is the occasion on which we are now assembled. It is no doubt to us all, as well as to the bereaved, one of deep and thrilling interest. Mrs. Morris, her little daughter, and its grandmother have been removed from these mortal shores. The speaker, who now addresses you, has been invited by the bereaved husband and father, who is a resident of Clinton, Mississippi, to meet him here and preach the funeral sermon of his dear fallen friends; and to administer the consolations of the gospel of Christ to his bleeding heart.

Though separated by a distance of more than 1900 miles, yet we have at length met in Gloucester, Virginia, agreeably to previous appointment. Here we parted four years ago. But though we shake the friendly hand of greeting and affection in this place, endeared to us by many pleasing recollections, yet the scenes around us, conspire to awaken in the soul many tender emotions. Nature is robed in glory as when we part-

* Delivered in the Episcopal church, Gloucester, Virginia, Sunday, July 16th, 1837, on the funeral occasion of the wife, mother, and child of CHRISTOPHER S. MORRIS, Esq.

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ed, but seems to mourn! The woodlands proudly wave; but methinks they wave in melancholy grandeur! The plantations smile, and the heavens beam serenity, but these seem mingled with pensiveness! The songsters carol their morning and evening lay, but it sounds to the bereaved heart, like the sad requiem over friendship's early tomb! In you and me, all Nature's beauty awakens no thrill of fond, rapturous delight, but seems to mourn with us over the triple grave of our fallen friends. Even the beautiful flowers, which adorn these gardens, seem to speak of withered hopes, and of blighted domestic joys.

Though sun in splendor make the morn,
Though woodland scenes with songs resound,
Though sweetest flowers the fields adorn,
Though all is now with glory crowned;
Yet here no joy the mourner sees,
All Nature's smiles to him are gone,
The songs of birds, the sighing breeze,
Cheer not his desolated home.

Such being the melancholy light in which the bereaved view the wonders of creation, while contemplating the gloom of the grave, which conceals the object of their affections, it becomes my duty on this occasion, to shed upon the dark and dreary mansions of the dead, the blessed light of revelation, by pointing them forward to the transcendent brightness of the resurrection morn, when death shall be swallowed up in victory, and

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the sceptre of the monster's boasted power shall be wrested from his iron grasp, by the strong hand of the Lion of the tribe of Judah. In order successfully to accomplish this work, and inspire the hearts of the bereaved with the consolations of this immortal hope, and the everlasting light of Christianity, we invite your serious attention to the following passage of Scripture.

"For none of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself. For whether we live, we live unto the Lord; and whether we die, we die unto the Lord; whether we live, therefore, or die, we are the Lord's. For to this end Christ both died, and rose, and revived, that he might be Lord of both the dead and living." —ROMANS XIV. 7—9.

From the language of our text we learn that man, whether in life or death, has not the disposal of himself; is not his own, but belongs to Jesus Christ, who is Lord (that is, owner or master) of both the dead and the living. This declaration naturally leads us to inquire, by what right does he claim the human race as his property? This question is a very important one, and must be settled by the Scriptures. We then appeal to the law and to the testimony.

The Psalmist says, "I will declare the decree: the Lord hath said unto me, thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee. Ask of me and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for

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thy possession." This scripture very naturally gives rise to another question, viz. Has the Son, in coincidence with this decree, asked the Father for this inheritance? He has, as the following language of Christ plainly implies; "All things are delivered unto me of my Father." Again; "Jesus knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands." It is further evident from the circumstance of his being uniformly called "the *only begotten Son of God and heir of all things.*" Hence, as he is the *only Son*, he is of course the only lawful heir to the inheritance above mentioned. This is plainly taught in the words of Paul, to the Hebrews; "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners, spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these latter days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things."

These scriptures inform us, not only by what authority and right he holds this property, but they are in perfect agreement with our text, that he is Lord of both the dead and the living. We are now at liberty further to inquire, For what purpose were the heathen given to him for an inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for a possession? Jesus answers the question in these words; "As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him." So they were

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committed to his hands that he might give unto them *eternal life*. But is there no possibility of his finally losing any part of this inheritance? There is not, for Jesus declares, — "All that the Father giveth me *shall come* to me; and him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out. For I came down from heaven not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day." From these declarations of Jesus Christ, it is perfectly clear, that the Father gave his Son the whole human race for an inheritance; and that they were his property, though lying in wickedness. Even the abandoned, the wretched heathen nations are not excluded, but particularly mentioned as belonging to him who is heir of all things.

As his inheritance was in a state of sin and bondage when given to him, it became necessary that it should be ransomed, and that the whole groaning creation should be delivered from the bondage of corruption, into the glorious liberty of the children of God, through a resurrection of the dead. Hence in this sense they are,

*Secondly, his by purchase.* The Scripture saith, "ye are bought with a price," — "are redeemed not with corruptible things as silver and gold, but with the precious blood of Christ."

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"He, by the grace of God, tasted death for every man." "He gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time." — Hence, a world, dead in trespasses and sins, are his by gift and heirship in time, and are his by ransom and redemption in eternity, where sin and pain are known no more. The apostle declares, that "he died for our offences, and was raised again for our justification." Hence, our offences will cease in death, and in the resurrection our justification will be realized. His resurrection is the true pledge of ours. "He is become the first-fruits of them that slept," and is, therefore, "the resurrection and the life of the world."

Do you ask for evidence, that his resurrection is, the true *likeness* and *pledge* of ours? The evidence shall be given. When God showed Moses the pattern of the ark of the covenant in Mount Sinai, he commanded him saying, "See thou make all things according to the pattern I showed thee in the mount." This ark was a model of the future temple built in Jerusalem, which God filled with his glory. So Christ was given as a covenant to the people. He, as our first-fruits, was shown, not on Mount Sinai, but on Mount Zion, beyond the ruins of the tomb, as the pattern, the true image, like unto whom all human kind shall be made. We are the materials, which are to compose the building of God, the

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house not made with hands, the temple immortal, which God will fill with his glory, when "he shall be all in all." The apostle says, Christ as a son was faithful over his house, whose house are we. This building embraces both Jews and Gentiles; the universe. He has "broken down the wall of partition between them, — for to make in himself of the twain one new man, and reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby." Paul adds, "Therefore we are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints and of the household of God, and built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself the chief corner-stone, in whom all the building fitly framed together, groweth into a holy temple in the Lord; in whom also are ye builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit." Hence, as Christ died for our offences, so when we die will our offences cease; and as he rose for our justification, so in our resurrection shall we be justified. We "shall (as Jesus says) be equal unto the angels, die no more, but be the children of God, being the children of the resurrection." We shall be like our pattern and head, and appear with him in resurrection glory; in fine, "we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is." The spiritual temple shall be finished by heaven's Supreme on Mount Zion, according to the pattern

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he has shown us in Christ. It shall receive the last fair touch from his immortal and all-perfect hand, and stand in infinite grandeur, under the meridian strength and splendor of his eternal smiles.

The speaker humbly trusts, that you now see the force of the text, why no man whether living or dying is his own, or at his own disposal, but is the Lord's, and to be disposed of as he sees fit. And to reveal to the human race, what disposition will finally be made of them, Jesus Christ died and rose, shed the light of immortal life on the darkness of the tomb, inspired the human soul with the most pleasing hopes, mounted the mediatorial throne, and reigns supreme, as Lord of both the dead and the living.

Indeed, I am well aware, that it is contended with a great deal of zeal, by men of learning and talents, that the unconverted are not Christ's, but belong to a wicked, fallen angel. This, the sympathising congregation will perceive, is in direct contradiction to our text, and to the plain testimony of sacred truth above adduced. If there be, indeed, a fallen angel, who is to possess a large portion of the human race as his property, and torment them to the never-ending ages of eternity, we then ask, is not he also an heir to a part of this inheritance? He is. How then can Christ be heir of all things? How can he, in

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this case, possess the heathen for his inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for a possession? We cannot but shudder at the consequences involved in this sentiment, and particularly so while standing on the graves of those we love. Though this subject is painful, yet that we may see the triumphs of truth over error, let us pursue it still further. If this fallen angel is an heir to a portion of the Father's estate, then he is also a son of God! Hence, there is no way to avoid the blasphemous conclusion, that God has two sons, equal heirs to the inheritance! How then can the Scriptures solemnly declare, that Jesus Christ is the only begotten Son of God, and heir of all things? O God, forgive the errors of thy creatures! The eye of faith is drowned in tears, and the soul rent with agony, while contemplating the absurdities involved in this doctrine, embraced by many well-meaning men. But it is at war with the lawful inheritance of Christ, it is at war with the unity of his sonship, it is at war with the record of eternal life, it is at war with the dearest interest and well-being of man, it is at war with the holiest affections of the soul, it is at war with all that heaven calls good, it is at war with the fondest hopes of the Christian, and is absolutely at war with the sentiment of his being Lord of both the dead and the living.

We have already shown by what right Christ

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claims the human race as his property. They are his, *First*, by gift or bequest, he being the only begotten Son of God and heir of all things. When given to him, they were in a state of sin. Hence, we have shown that they were his, *Secondly*, by purchase, ransom, or redemption from sin and death to holiness and immortal life, through a resurrection from the dead. But on the other hand, can as good reasons be given, that they of right belong to another? We go further;—can a single scrap of divine testimony be adduced, that any part of the human race were bequeathed or given by the Father to a fallen angel? Where in the Scriptures is he called an heir, or where is his sonship enrolled? Where is he ever said to be the head of any man; or to have given himself a ransom for a single human being? Or where is there the ratification of any covenant between him and the Creator? We search the Scriptures in vain for such melancholy testimony. And, until such testimony can be adduced, we shall insist, that none belong to him either by right of heirship, gift, or purchase.

It is probable, that in view of the above, it may now occur to the objector's mind, that Jesus said, "Ye are of your father the devil, and his work ye will do." But the candid hearer will perceive, that they were his, not in property or relationship, but in character,—in works.

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Whenever this scripture, or any of similar import, occurs to the objector's mind, let him remember, that Jesus Christ was manifested in the flesh to destroy the works of the devil. When this shall be accomplished, — when the Lamb of God shall have taken away the sin of the world, in what sense will they then be the children of the devil? In no sense whatever. He will not only destroy the works of the devil, but destroy the devil himself, which proves, that he is not an immortal being. Paul says, "Forasmuch, then, as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, Christ himself likewise took part of the same, that through death he might destroy him that hath the power of death, that is the devil," &c. Hence the devil and his works both will be destroyed. His dark domain shall be shaken to its base and annihilated forever.

Having clearly proved, that Christ, as the only begotten Son of God, is heir of all things, and Lord (that is, master or owner) of both the dead and the living, we will now attend to the main point suggested in our text, which is, the resurrection of the dead. He died, and to this end, that he might be owner of all mankind, whether dead or alive, in time or in eternity. They are his property and not at their own disposal. No man can so live to himself as to control his own destiny, or make himself the property of anoth-

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er. Living or dying he is the Lord's, and is to be brought, by the power of God, into the resurrection world in just such a nature as he sees fit to bestow. To reveal to us what that nature is to be, Christ has died and risen as the first-fruits of the human harvest. It is to be the nature of angels. We are to be made alive in the moral likeness of his resurrection, and bear the image of the heavenly in Christ the second Adam, by the same irresistible power, that we now bear the earthly image of the first Adam.

Hence we perceive, that the immortal resurrection of the dead assumes a most important and momentous character in divine revelation. This resurrection is, in fact, the *Gospel* of our *salvation* and *sanctification*. It is the *promise* God made to the Jewish fathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, of blessing all the kindreds, nations, and families of the earth in his seed, Christ. It is that better covenant, which cannot be broken any more than his covenant with the day and the night, and is in all things well ordered and sure, because it is established upon better promises than the first. It is the hope and faith of the Christian, and the consolation of the distressed and bereaved. In fine, the resurrection of the dead is our only hope of an immortal being beyond the tomb. In making the above positive declarations, the hearer may suppose that we wholly overlook salvation

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by Christ. Not so ; for Christ declares himself to be the resurrection and the life.

We shall now proceed to prove the above declarations true. In order successfully to accomplish this, we shall discard all speculations involved in human creeds, and shall humbly lean upon the naked grandeur of the sacred oracles of truth to sustain us.

*First ;* the resurrection of the dead is the promise God swore unto the Jewish fathers, that all nations, kindreds, and families of the earth should be blessed in Christ the seed of Abraham, and it is the hope of the Christian. In proof of this position we turn to the Scriptures.

God swore to Abraham, saying, "In thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed." Again, "In thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed." God said to Isaac, "I will perform the oath which I sware unto Abraham thy father, . . . . . and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed." Here we perceive that the blessing of all the nations and families of the earth is not only the *promise* made, but the *oath* God swore to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. This promise is the Gospel, as saith the apostle ; "And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the Gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed." So it is not only

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the gospel of God, but the justification of the heathen; yes, of all nations. Again, Paul says, "For when God made promise to Abraham, because he could swear by no greater, he sware by himself. . . . . Wherein God, willing more abundantly to show unto the heirs of the promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an *oath*, that by two immutable things in which it was *impossible* for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us; which hope we have as an anchor to the soul, sure and steadfast, and entereth into that within the vail; whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus." Here we perceive, that the promise sworn to Abraham is the Christian hope, sure and steadfast, and involves the resurrection of the dead in him, who, as our forerunner, entered for us within the vail, and, in our behalf, "took possession of our joy." It embraces all the nations, kindreds, and families of the earth, who are here called the heirs of promise.

As a further proof that this promise and hope are the resurrection of the dead, we again refer to the testimony of Paul before king Agrippa. "And now I stand and am judged for the hope of the promise made of God unto our fathers; unto which promise our twelve tribes, instantly serving God day and night, *hope* to come; for

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which *hope's sake*, king Agrippa, I am accused of the Jews. Why should it be thought a thing incredible with you, that God should raise the dead?" Here the same promise God swore to the Jewish fathers, is again adverted to by his inspired servant, and by him is summed up as being wholly embraced in the *resurrection of the dead*, which is the only gospel hope of future existence and immortal bliss.

Again, *the resurrection of the dead* is not only called the Gospel, embracing the final *blessedness* of all the families of the earth in Christ, — it is not only the Christian *hope*, *faith*, and *justification*, but it is the *second covenant*, embracing "the *sure mercies* of David." Speaking of David as a type of Christ, Isaiah says, "I will make an everlasting covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David. Behold, I have given him for a witness to the people, a leader and commander to the people." Let us now hear the apostle apply this prophecy. "And we declare unto you glad tidings, how that the promise which was made unto the fathers, God hath fulfilled the same unto us their children, in that he hath raised up Jesus again; as it is also written in the second Psalm, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee. And as concerning that he raised him up from the dead, now no more to return to corruption, he said on this wise, I will give thee the sure

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mercies of David." In the above quotation of scripture, the promise of blessing all the families of the earth in Christ is again referred to, and the sure mercies of David, in the everlasting covenant, are repeated, and the whole is clearly stated by Paul, as meaning nothing more nor less than the immortal resurrection of the dead.

Again, *the resurrection* is our salvation and eternal life. The apostle says, "Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the *Gospel* which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand, by which also ye are saved," &c. The apostle then goes on to prove the resurrection of Christ, as the "first-fruits of them that slept," and the consequent resurrection of all mankind in his "image, in incorruption, in power, in immortality, and in glory;" at which period, sin, the sting of death, shall be no more. Peter says, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who, according to his abundant mercy, hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away." Here, by the resurrection of our Lord, we are begotten to a lively hope of an incorruptible and unfading inheritance. But, according to common opinion, what hope could the resurrection of Jesus Christ give any one, if, perchance, they might be raised



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to a state of never-ending sin and pain? No hope at all. In fact, converts are never called upon in this day to rest their hopes of salvation in the resurrection of the dead. No, they are called upon to rest their hopes in some change they may experience in this life, according to their free agency. This is the pivot on which they believe their final destiny is suspended, and on which it must one day turn! Every change a person may experience in this life for the better, I hold to be sacred and valuable as a *present salvation*, but this has nothing to do with our immortal condition beyond the grave, which "is the free gift of God, and not of works, lest any man should boast."

But, inquires the objector, does the resurrection in Christ give us new natures? does it make us holy? Has not this, I ask, been clearly proved in what has been offered? If the resurrection is the blessing of all the nations and families of the earth in Christ the seed of Abraham, — if the resurrection is the only faith and hope of man, — if the resurrection is the gospel of our salvation, — if it is the everlasting covenant, embracing the "sure mercies of David, being in all things well ordered and sure," as has been abundantly proved, why then will not all you ask be effected? If all that die in Adam are to be made alive in Christ, incorruptible, glorious, and immortal by the power of God, — if all are to bear the image of the

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heavenly as they once bore the image of the earthy, and shout the victory over death, sin, and the grave, what more, then, can be wanted to perfect our final salvation? Nothing. We will, however, produce a few passages of Scripture as to the nature mankind shall possess in the resurrection.

Jesus said to the Sadducees, "Ye do err, not knowing the Scriptures nor the power of God. For in the resurrection they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels of God in heaven." Again, he says, "Neither can they die any more, for they are equal unto the angels, and are the children of God, being the children of the resurrection." Here we perceive, that by the power of God, of which the Sadducees were ignorant, they were, through the resurrection, to be made as the angels of God in heaven; they were indeed to be made the children of God by no other means, but by being made the children of the resurrection. Paul uses similar language to the Romans. "For the creation itself shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God." Here he declares the creation to be in travailing pains, and represents their deliverance under the figure of a birth, by which birth they are to be introduced into the glorious liberty of the children of God. This the apostle more

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fully explains in 1 Cor. xv. already referred to. He says, "The first man is of the earth earthy; the second man is the Lord from heaven. As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy; and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly. And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly." But of how many is he here speaking, who are to bear the image of the heavenly? This he had before answered, verse 22. "For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive." To this end he arose, that he might be Lord of both the dead and the living. And as their lawful owner, he must reign till all are subdued, and the last enemy, death, is destroyed. "And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him who put all things under him, that God may be ALL IN ALL."

We now clearly perceive why the apostles went everywhere preaching Jesus and the resurrection. Christ, the resurrection and the life, is the gospel of our salvation. The resurrection is the only door into eternity. No one enters there a disembodied spirit as men preach. Man, when he resigns his breath, falls into the unconscious sleep of death; and were there no resurrection, this sleep would be eternal. The apostles teach us, that if there be no resurrection, "then is our

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preaching vain; your faith is also vain, ye are yet in your sins, and they that are fallen asleep in Christ are perished," that is, annihilated. Hence we see the propriety of this passage; "Since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead." From this sleep we are to be raised in the last day, which means the gospel day, and commenced nearly eighteen hundred years ago. Hence the dead are every moment rising in the same succession they die. The sleep in death of our Lord was short, and will be so with his inheritance. From it nothing but the power of God can awake us. He aroused Adam from unconsciousness to natural life by miracle, and all were naturally born in him. So he aroused Jesus, the second Adam, from the dead by miracle, and we shall naturally be made alive in him who was the first-born from the dead, — we shall shake off the slumbers of the tomb, and ascend to worlds of immortal life and joy in heaven.

"In the dust I 'm doomed to sleep,
But shall not sleep forever;
Fear may for a moment weep,
Christian courage never.

Years in rapid course shall roll
By Time's chariot driven,
And my reawakened soul,
Wing its flight to heaven!

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What though o'er my mortal tomb,
Clouds and mist be blending?
Sweetest hope shall chase the gloom,
Hopes to heaven ascending.

These shall be my stay, my trust,
Ever bright and vernal,
Life shall blossom out of dust,
Life and joy eternal."

I should do injustice to my own feelings on this solemn occasion, were I not to speak of Mrs. Morris. She was a lady of a most amiable disposition, possessing a sweet and uniform temper of soul. She was rather of a serious cast of mind than otherwise, — was most circumspect in her deportment, and chaste in her conversation. The smile of sweetness which seemed mingled with resignation and contentment, often broke over her features, and mantled her cheeks with cheerfulness and joy, like the morning sun gilding the eastern sky in crimson light and glory. She was indeed the light of her domestic altar, and around her tender heart clustered the holiest affections to her companion and children, and there they burned with an undimming flame, till the lamp of life expired.

I was with her when she committed a dear infant to the grave. I saw her hold its dying form, as it lay panting for breath. I saw the fond yearnings of her heart, and the affections of her soul,

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beaming through the lustre of her eye. I saw the tranquil resignation, with which she surrendered it up to him who gave it being, when it expired. She listened with deep and thrilling interest to the funeral services, and felt a peace which passeth understanding, in the Christian hope full of immortality.

She was an affectionate companion, and a tender, indulgent mother. She was most sincere in her friendships. She was a bright and useful member of society and a shining ornament to her sex. She was a tender and faithful mistress to her servants, and died beloved and respected by all who knew her. And I should do injustice to her dear memory and to the feelings of my heart, were I not publicly to acknowledge her hospitality and kindness to me from our first acquaintance till we shook the farewell hand of mortal separation.

But she is gone! That hand, so warm, is now cold and lifeless as the clods of the valley! Her florid cheek has turned pale in death! Her eye, so full of lustre, has ceased to roll in softness on her companion and children, and is darkened forever! Her heart, which once beat so high with hopes of life and glory, has ceased to throb, and her dear voice of sweetest sound is hushed in perpetual silence!

But she left the world in peace, and her friends

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in tears! She had a hope beyond these mortal shores. In her was evinced the excellency of the Gospel of universal grace to the dying. In her it manifested its transcendent power, its peerless majesty and glory, — its supreme conquest over death, and its immortal light and life over the approaching darkness and ruins of the tomb! It was this which elevated, sustained, and cheered her languid spirit, when the embers of mortal life were feebly glimmering in the socket of existence. It was this, which cheered up and brightened her hope for a future world, and enabled her to triumph in soul, and smile over the very ruins of death. She knew in whom she trusted. She knew that she belonged to him who is Lord of both the dead and the living; and by his resurrection from the dead, she knew that she was begotten to a lively hope of an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved for her in heaven.

Thus she fell asleep and closed her eyes forever on the scenes of earth. Peace to her sacred shade. Through a resurrection, her bright spirit has already mounted on wings of fire, seized a new harp, and added fresh notes to the harmony of the redeemed. She has put on immortality, incorruption, and glory, — and being a child of the resurrection, she is the immortal child of God, — can die no more; and being confirmed in the

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nature of angels, she has ascended to heaven singing the song of the first-born in the resurrection, —O death! where is thy sting? O grave! where is thy victory? Thanks be to God who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. "Even so, Abba Father, for so it seemeth good in thy sight."

Her little daughter, whom I never saw, has also, in the bud of being, sunk to rest. Peace to the little sufferer! Immortal glory to the once prattling innocent!

> "Stain not this flower with sorrow's tear,
> Nought but the blighted leaf is here;
> 'T was taken from its earthly stem
> To deck an angel's diadem."

Mrs. Morris, the aged grandmother of this child, and the mother of our afflicted and bereaved friend, has paid the debt of nature, and full of years sunk to a peaceful, honored grave. She was long on the theatre of action, but ever stood firm at the post of maternal duty, and left the world without a single blot on her name. She was a kind and obliging neighbour, a faithful and indulgent mother, a shining example to the circle in which she moved, and a warm friend and advocate for the precepts and doctrines of Christ.

She was brought up in the belief of the doctrines of total depravity and endless misery. But she burst the shackles of early tradition, and opened her mind to conviction. She read that

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unanswerable work, "Ballou on Atonement," and comparing it with Scripture, she became entirely satisfied of the truth of universal salvation. In this faith she lived, in this faith she rejoiced, and in this triumphant faith she expired. And there is no virtue that adorns the character, but what clustered around the heart of this venerable matron in our Israel. In regard to her, we may well say, "The memory of the just is blessed."

My dear, bereaved brother! Most deeply do I sympathise with you in this triple woe. What can I say to you by way of consolation? Your dearest, your fondest friends, are gone! The aged mother, who watched over the cradle of your helpless infancy, and sustained you in boyhood, has sunk to her grave. She was your unchanging friend, and her affections you could never turn. No one but a mother can tell the strong and lasting affections of a mother's soul. They are stronger than death to the children of her bosom. They are a noble resemblance of the Parent fountain above. He compares himself to the mother. "Though the mother forget her sucking child, and cease to have compassion on the son of her bosom, yet will not I forget." In the hands of that glorious God your dear friends have fallen, and are re-embosomed in more than human affections. Yes, your child, and the dear companion of your ways, have in rapid succession, followed your aged mother to the grave.

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Lover and friend has God taken from you, and turned your acquaintance into darkness! Like the scathed and solitary oak on the mountain top, so, my dear brother, you stand alone in the world, bereft of all you once held dear, and your brightest prospects of earthly felicity, seem overcast with the shadows of death. No more shall you meet them in your out-goings or in-comings; yet, as you wander with pensive step, over each favorite spot where they have often been, imagination will often place their loved forms before your eyes, and hear the sweet sound of their voices yet falling with melancholy music on your ear. Your mansion seems empty, your fireside deserted, and the cricket in the hearth chirps solitude and desolation. Each article of wearing apparel is a sad memorial of their departed worth, on which memory hangs in melancholy reminiscence.

But, brother and sister, you have heard the witnesses, and the summing up of the evidence, that they belong to him, who is Lord of both the dead and the living. Hence, we shall meet them among blood-washed millions in heaven. Though sorrowful, yet here you can rejoice.

And now permit me, in conclusion, to say to your little son, Dear boy, you are not of sufficient age to realize the loss you have sustained, in your affectionate mother. But it is desired, that you may remember her, and that her virtues may never be blotted from your recollection. I

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know of no way, more successfully to accomplish this, than to repeat to you the beautiful language of the poet, which you will commit to memory; and in it you may realize the feelings and hopes of your lamented mother, as she rocked your infant cradle.

"Lo! at the couch where infant beauty sleeps,
Her silent watch the mournful mother keeps;
She, while the lovely babe unconscious lies,
Smiles on her slumbering child with pensive eyes,
And weaves a song of melancholy joy,—
'Sleep image of thy father, sleep, my boy;
No lingering hour of sorrow shall be thine;
No sigh that rends thy father's heart and mine;
Bright as his manly sire the son shall be
In form and soul; but, ah! more blest than he!
Thy fame, thy worth, thy filial love, at last,
Shall soothe this aching heart for all the past,—
With many a smile my solitude repay,
And chase the world's ungenerous scorn away.
'And say when summoned from the world and thee,
I lay my head beneath the willow tree,
Wilt *thou*, sweet mourner! at my stone appear,
And sooth my parted spirit, lingering near?
Oh, wilt thou come, at evening hour, to shed
The tears of memory o'er my narrow bed;
With aching temples on thy hand reclined,
Muse on the last farewell I leave behind,
Breathe a deep sigh to winds that murmur low,
And think on all my love, and all my woe?"

Having tendered you, my mourning friends, the above consolations and hopes, I bid you an affectionate farewell. God bless you.

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## OBITUARY NOTICE.

After attending the funeral of Mrs. Morris, on the next Sunday, July 27th, 1837, I was called to preach the funeral sermon of our lamented friend and brother, John Scott. He was an aged man; and had been, for many years, an exemplary and worthy member of the Methodist church in Gloucester County, Virginia. I preached there in 1831, and he was among the first who openly acknowledged his faith in the salvation of all. He was a man of fervent piety and great benevolence, and circumspect in his life and conversation. He had no children, and hence no family to leave behind, except an aged companion.

His great anxiety seemed to be, the welfare of his slaves. He first thought of setting them free; but on mature reflection, he found that he could not do it without distressing mothers and children, and rendering their condition, on the whole, worse than to retain them in slavery. By their consent, I believe, he gave them all, except one, to his nephew, Mr. Thomas M. Stubblefield. That one was his body servant, a very active, intelligent servant, by the name of John. He desired his freedom, and it was promptly given him, and with it five hundred dollars in cash.

Brother Scott died in peace; and never was there witnessed a more moving scene of impassioned grief than among his servants. They refused to be comforted over the loss of their beloved master. John went away; but at length grew sick of freedom, returned, voluntarily delivered up his money to Mr. Stubblefield's care, and desired to become his body servant, and serve him as he had his lamented master.

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Brother Scott's funeral was attended by some who came fifteen miles. There was great anxiety, on that occasion, to hear our sentiments defended; and, by request of our friends, I spoke three hours. Many happy moments have I spent at the house of our lamented brother. But he is gone forever from our mortal sight! He rests in heaven.

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# SERMON III.

## SALVATION BY FAITH.

"For what if some did not believe, shall their unbelief make the faith of God without effect? God forbid; yea, let God be true, but every man a liar." ROMANS III. 3, 4.

THE doctrine of salvation by Jesus Christ, is worthy the solemn consideration of all men. It is this, that rendered a revelation necessary. It is this, that kindled the flame of transport in celestial bosoms, and raised that triumphant song, "Glory to God in the highest, on earth peace, good-will towards men." Salvation is the doctrine of the Bible, and ought ever to be the theme of the pulpit. Salvation is the oracle of heaven, around which all denominations assemble, receive their instructions, and believe according to the force of evidence.

Prefaced with these remarks, we will now proceed to state what we conceive to be the *Law* and *Gospel*, — point out the distinction between them, and defend the gospel doctrine of salvation by faith.

The law was a conditional covenant between God and man. It was predicated on works. Under this covenant, if a man were strictly moral in his external deportment, if he lived up to its

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*letter*, he was considered righteous. This covenant was imperfect, because it could be kept externally without reaching the heart. They could exclaim, like the young man who came to Jesus, "All these things have I kept, from my youth up," and still lack that one great point, *charity*. Therefore, by the deeds of the law no flesh could be justified in the sight of God. The law, being temporary in its nature, had nothing to do with eternal things.

Paul says, "Sin is the transgression of the law." — "Where there is no law there is not the knowledge of sin." From this it appears, that sin, being a transgression of that law, which was given us for the regulation of our conduct in this life, can receive no punishment in the future world. If sin should be committed in the future state, then in the future state it would be punished. The same argument will apply to our obedience to the law, which can receive, for the same reason, no reward in that world. "No flesh shall be justified by the deeds of the law." "Eternal life is the gift of God." If so, then it cannot be "of works, lest any man should boast." God, being infinite in wisdom, could not have failed to enact a law so perfect, and so exactly adapted to the nature of man, that *obedience* would render him a rich reward, and *disobedience* a condign punishment. The wise man says, that

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"the righteous shall be recompensed in the earth; much more the wicked and the sinner."

We now turn to the spirit of the law. "To love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and thy neighbour as thyself, is the fulfilment of the law;" and if we are not to be saved by the law, then our *love* to God and each other cannot save us; for that is the law. By what then are we to be saved? Answer: by the Gospel, which is God's love manifested to his creatures. The conclusion then is, that we are not to be saved by our *love* to God, but by God's *love* to us. This, I presume, no one will dispute. Here then we discern the difference between the law and the gospel. God's *love* is the *cause* of salvation; human *love* is the *effect*. "Herein (says John) is love; not that we loved God, but that he loved us." "We love him *because* he *first* loved us." How many did he love? He so loved the world, who were dead in trespasses and sins, that he freely delivered up his Son for us all, — he, by the grace of God, tasted death for every man. This is the gospel-love that God commendeth towards us, and the love that will finally save us.

Many persons contend that we must love God and do certain duties, or we cannot be saved. This is preaching ourselves. It is preaching the love of man as the *cause* of his salvation, instead of the love of God. And while thus preaching,



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they will perhaps, at the same time, tell the sinner that God is his enemy. But will the sinner's love make God his friend? will it cause his Creator to love him? No; right the reverse of this is the doctrine of Christ. "We love God because he first loved us." If we deny God's *first* love to the sinner, we then destroy the very *cause* by which *alone* the sinner can be made to love God. If we make men believe that God is their enemy and hates them, then we use all the means in our power to drive them from the bosom of their Father, and keep them in darkness and sin.

The sinner, in this situation, can never be made to serve God, only by being driven to it by terror, the same as some wretched slave is made to cower and submit in fear and dread to some revengeful tyrant. But this is not the service God requires. He requires a service which is delightful, and in which his creature feels an abundant reward. We grant, that men, under the first covenant, were called upon to fear God. The reason of this appears obvious, when we reflect that God had covenanted to bestow certain blessings upon them, providing they would do their duty. If they failed, then he would execute the temporal judgments upon them, which the law points out, and threatens. Under this covenant men had just as much reason to fear, as they were liable to transgress it.

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But when an angel announced the dawn of a better covenant, he said, "Fear not, for behold I bring you glad tidings of great joy." In this is nothing to be feared. All the fear lies in the first, and thunders out to every sinner, "Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things written in the law to do them!" But John, speaking in view of the second covenant, says, "There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear, because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love." The *first* covenant is founded on works, and is *conditional;* but the *second* is founded on the immutable promise of God, and is *unconditional.* In the law, we are commanded *to do* according to the reasonableness of its requirements; but in the gospel we are exhorted *to believe* in view of evidence and fact. And as no man can believe, or disbelieve what he pleases, therefore conditions are excluded.

What is the meaning of Gospel? It is good tidings of great joy. It is life and immortality brought to light at the appearing of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, who has abolished death, by giving us the assurance of a resurrection from corruption to incorruption and glory. It is news. In view of news, what is the first thing necessary? Answer; *belief.* It is impossible to work news; therefore the gospel is not of works. In the law, the first requirement is *to do;* but in the

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gospel, the first requirement is *to believe*. The law-covenant is therefore temporary, fallible, and uncertain; but the gospel-covenant is eternal, infallible, and, in all things, well ordered and sure. The *first* rests on the obedience of the creature, but the *second* on the promises of Jehovah. Paul, therefore, calls it a *better* covenant, established upon *better* promises.

Perhaps some one may feel disposed to ask, whether faith is all that is necessary? We reply, that it is the *cause* which produces its effect. Paul answers this question, thus; "We conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law. Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid; yea, we establish the law." Here let the question be asked, How do we establish the law by *faith?* Answer; "Faith will have its perfect work." But what is that perfect work, which faith produces? Answer; Faith works love in the soul; and if we love God we will keep his commandments. And *faith*, *love*, and *keeping the commandments* are the three exercises, that form the Christian character. Faith is the foundation; works are not. We cannot begin to build on works. Instead of being the *first*, they are the *last* Christian grace. They are the visible *effects* of an inward, living faith.

Faith, and faith *only*, is the seed rooted and

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grounded in the truth, and, to use a Bible figure, it becometh a tree, and produces all the fruits of the spirit, — love, joy, meekness, temperance, long-suffering, forbearance. This is what the apostle calls the "righteousness of faith," in contradistinction to "the righteousness of the law," produced by fear. Paul compares faith to a good olive tree. The Jews, through unbelief, were broken off, and "thou (the Gentile) standest by faith." Jesus says, "If ye have faith as a grain of mustard-seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, remove hence to yonder place, and it shall remove." Here, in parable, faith is represented as removing mountains of sin. He further says, "Thy *faith* hath made thee whole"; not thy *works:* Paul exclaims, "Faith works by love, purifies the heart, and overcomes the world." John says, "And this is the victory that overcometh the world even our faith."

It is a certain fact, that none of these salutary effects are ascribed to human works. The apostles in no instance say, that *works* purify the heart, or overcome the world, — or that this is the victory, even your *works*. The whole is ascribed to *faith;* because that is the living tree on which the good fruits grow. Works are, in Scripture, called fruits. "By their *fruits* ye shall know them;" that is, by their *works*. "A good tree cannot bring forth evil *fruit*." To carry out this

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figure, we would remark, that fruit can have no existence till the tree is first produced. Therefore, in a gospel sense, no good works, acceptable to God, can be produced without a true and living faith. The apostle declares, "Without faith it is impossible to please God." The gospel being good tidings, or news, are you satisfied that faith is the first thing necessary? I presume all denominations will assent to the fact, that faith is the first religious exercise of the creature. We shall then obey the command of the apostle, and "contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints."

But, asks the reader, what matter is it which is first in order, whether *love*, *faith*, or *works*? I reply, that it is a matter of vast importance; and without understanding this fact, we cannot come to the knowledge of the truth, even though we should be ever learning. If these three Christian graces, *faith*, *love*, and *works*, are preached in a confused and mixed manner, we cannot arrive at a true understanding of a gospel salvation, neither can we tell the difference between law and gospel. The law is of works, and the gospel is of faith. And no man can fulfil the spirit of the law, without faith in the gospel. When the sinner exercises faith in the love and goodness of God in freely giving him eternal life, which infinitely transcends all other blessings, that moment

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faith works love in his heart, and causes him to rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory. He then loves God because God first loved him. And when the sinner loves God, he is passed from death unto life, and that love is the fulfilment of the law.

We are now led to see the consistency of faith being the first step. It is the very *cause* that produces *love* to God; and *love* induces us to keep the commandments. "Faith works by love," and "If ye love me," says Jesus, "ye will keep my commandments."

We will now introduce an example, which will plainly show the distinction between the law and gospel, and in what manner they affect the sinner. Suppose a king to sentence six of his subjects to imprisonment during life, and to command them to spend their days in hard labor. They are put in confinement, refuse to obey his commands, refuse to labor, and, in the midst of their miseries, curse his name. They are now in disobedience under the condemnation of the law.

The king says to his only son, I love those subjects, and I covenant with you to set them free in three years. The son says, Father, I delight to do thy will. Let me go and reveal to them the glad tidings of this covenant promise. The king answers, My son, in the fulness of time I

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will send you. Let them remain, one year, under the law. But, says the son, they are now transgressing your law, and need instruction. The king replies, I will send my servant to enforce that law. Let him go and inform the prisoners, that I am angry with them for their conduct; and if they will obey my commands, and labor faithfully, they shall have excellent food and good clothing as a reward. But if they will not comply, they shall be chained, and kept on bread and water, as a punishment for their disobedience.

The servant goes and delivers to them this message. Three of those subjects, for *fear* of the punishment and in *hope* of the reward, obey the king, and outwardly respect his commands, but perhaps have little or no love for him. [Here we see the righteousness of the law, which is not acceptable to God.] They accordingly receive, day by day, the promised reward. But the other three prisoners despise these conditions and refuse to obey. They are chained, fed on bread and water, and meet their deserts.

Here, then, are six prisoners laboring under the law, and groaning in bondage, with no hopes of deliverance. The law knows of no deliverance, no redemption. It simply serves as a schoolmaster, to teach them the difference between right and wrong, — to teach them the will

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of the king, and thus prepare them to receive a better covenant, which is to be revealed to them by the king's son. But under the covenant they now are, they have no motives to prompt them to obedience, but the *fear* of punishment and the *hope* of reward. In our next, this will be fully illustrated.

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# SERMON IV.

## SALVATION BY FAITH.

[Continued.]

We resume the argument, in this discourse, concerning those prisoners brought forward in our last. We left them in bondage under the sentence of the law, with no hopes of deliverance. The first year rolls away. The king says, My son, the time has come; go, and reveal my love to these prisoners, by bringing the promise of their redemption to light. The son flies on wings of love, enters the prison and exclaims; I bring you good tidings of great joy. My father, the king, is your friend. He loves you; and that love has induced him to proclaim your liberation as a free gift. He has promised (and he cannot lie), that in two years from this day you shall be free. This covenant, so far as concerns its fulfilment, is unconditional. Believe, and you will be saved, by faith in the promise, from your present fears and condemnation under the law.

Those stubborn prisoners see a sufficiency of evidence to believe the promise. They exercise unshaken faith, in this second covenant between the father and son. This faith works by love in their hearts, and purifies them from disobedience.

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Their souls melt in view of the love and goodness of the king, revealed to them by his son. In fine, they love him because he first loved them. They are now saved by faith in his promise, from not only all their miseries and sorrows, but from their disobedience, and look forward with joy, to the day of redemption. Here we perceive the "*righteousness of faith*," which far exceeds the "*righteousness of the law*." They now delight to obey the king, because they are under the influence of love.

Here let the question be asked, — are these three men to be let out of prison, at the appointed time, because they believe the promise or love and obey the king? They are not. Their redemption depended on the truth and faithfulness of the king's promise, which he made to his son, and that promise would have been fulfilled, even if it had not been revealed to them, till the day of their deliverance. They are not to be set free, as a reward for their *faith*, *love*, and *obedience*. They have great peace and joy in believing *that promise*. They are in the happy enjoyment of a salvation by faith, and that is all the reward they deserve, or have reason to expect. We here perceive, that these three men are made to establish the law of their king, by faith, in the good news he sent them by his son, which is to them a gospel. We now see the propriety of the

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apostle's language. "We conclude that a man is justified by faith, without the deeds of the law. Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid; yea, we establish the law." We also perceive, that these three men are not to be liberated from prison, because they believe the promise, or love and obey the king. But on the contrary, it is the king's love and promise to them which sets them free.

Let us now notice the other three prisoners. One says, I do not believe that we shall ever be released from prison. It is too good news to be true. Well, shall his unbelief make the king's promise of none effect? The king forbid; yea let the king be true, but that man a liar. But let it be remembered that he cannot be proved a liar, unless he is liberated. Would you now go and tell that man, Sir, because you will not *believe*, you shall never come forth from prison? But do you not perceive that by so doing, you would give the king the lie? It would be saying that his promise was good for nothing, unless the man would believe it. It would be contending that the unbelief of this prisoner will make the king's promise of none effect.

The other two prisoners exclaim, we believe this *second* covenant, but it must bear some resemblance to the *first*, which is conditional. We believe that we shall get out of this prison, if we

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continue to serve the king as we have heretofore, by keeping his commandments. Here are two men, trusting in the *first covenant* for deliverance. They are trusting in the law. They are depending on their own *love* and *faithfulness* to the king for redemption, and not on the king's *love*, *promise*, and *faithfulness* to them. Here then we see the righteousness of the law in those two prisoners; in another we see the effect of unbelief; and in those three who remained disobedient under the *first covenant*, we see the righteousness which is of faith, when they heard the glad tidings of redemption in the second covenant.

At length the day of their redemption dawns. They are all brought to the knowledge of the truth. Those three prisoners, who were saved by faith in the promise, during those two years of suspense, now find their faith lost in certainty. Their salvation by faith has come to an end. And so has the unbelief, condemnation, and doubtings of the other three prisoners. In one word, the *belief* and *unbelief* of the six are lost in knowledge, and they burst out in songs of deliverance. So we perceive that a salvation by faith, and a condemnation in unbelief, can last no longer than till we come to the knowledge of the truth in eternity.

Let us now apply this to the Scriptures. Man sinned, and not only involved himself in guilt and

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misery, but was sentenced to that very death with which God threatened him; "Dust thou art and unto dust shalt thou return." Here was the end of the first covenant, and the termination of all the miseries of life. It is evident from revelation, as well as reason, that man at death drops to a state of insensibility, and knows no more till he is made alive in Christ, who is himself the second covenant. The language of Scripture is, the dead know not any thing, they sleep, — and the apostle (in 1 Cor. xv.) reasons that if there be no resurrection, then there will be no future existence; that they which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished, that preaching was vain,— faith was also vain, and that the Christians were yet in their sins. On such language as this, I can put no other construction than that the resurrection is our salvation and eternal life, our deliverance from sin and imperfection. Under the first covenant, the resurrection in Christ was not revealed to the human family, and they remained of course under the sentence of condemnation, with no hopes of a future existence. "By the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation." Obedience to the law was enforced by threatenings on the one hand, and promises of temporal rewards on the other, which were communicated to the fathers by the prophets.

But God has in these latter days spoken unto

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us by his Son, and through him revealed the second covenant, in which he "gave him the heathen for an inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for a possession," and declared him to be the resurrection and life of the world. If in the divine counsels no Christ had been provided, the human family, it appears, would have remained in eternal slumber. They would have known but one covenant, which would have rewarded and punished them according to their deeds, and consigned them to the regions of the dead. "But since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead."

God saw fit to keep the human family, for four thousand years under the first covenant, without the knowledge of eternal life, through the resurrection of the dead. But it was, at length, "made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and brought life and immortality to light through the Gospel." Yes, he first brought it to light, and through his apostle declared, "In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began, but hath in due time manifested his word through preaching." This promise of eternal life all men are called upon to believe. The moment they believe, they are saved by faith, and are at peace; and they that doubt are damned; they are already under condemnation. But shall their

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unbelie. make God's promise of eternal life, of none effect? God forbid; yea, let God be true, but every man a liar. "For he hath concluded them all in unbelief that he might have mercy upon all."

We have now noticed the two covenants, — the *law* and *gospel*, have pointed out the distinction between them, — shown that all *conditions* are confined to the law, and that the gospel is *unconditional*, and justly requires our faith and confidence. We will now bring to view the scripture doctrine of salvation by faith, and show that divine truth must have an existence before we can be called upon to believe.

All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is based upon eternal and unchanging truth. Truth is one of the attributes of Jehovah, and the unshaken pillar that supports the throne of eternity. In truth and righteousness he governs the world, and by an omnipotent arm wields the destinies of men. Truth is the sun of divine revelation, pouring its beams on intelligent creation, and calling upon all men to believe. If a man assert that which does exist, it is a truth; but if he assert that which does not exist, it is a falsehood. Whatever has an existence in the compass of reality, is a truth to be believed, and whatever has no such existence, is a falsehood not to be believed. It is beyond the power of man to

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create one solitary divine truth. All that he can do, is to declare the existence of that which may be hidden from others, or relate some circumstances respecting that which does absolutely exist. An absolute truth must, therefore, be presented to the understandings of men, before they can be called upon to believe it, or before they can be called *believers* for embracing it, or *unbelievers* for rejecting it. No man can be an unbeliever for rejecting that which does not exist.

We now commence plain argument, by using great plainness of speech. In preaching the Gospel of Jesus Christ, truth must be the foundation. If, then, truth must exist before men can be called upon to believe, the question arises, what is *that truth*, which the *second covenant* reveals for the belief of mankind? Answer, it is the record God hath given of his Son. But what is the *record?* Let John answer, "This is the record, that God hath given to us *eternal life*, and this life is in his Son." It then follows, that we are to believe that God has given us eternal life, in his Son, before the world began, and unchangeably promised it. Paul says; "In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began." If we believe the record, we are in the Scriptures recognised as *believers*, and are saved by faith, and will of course exhibit in our life and conversation, the righteousness of faith.



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The great error of many, who read the Bible, consists in supposing there is but one salvation. But there are two. The *first* is a special salvation by belief in the promise, and the *second* is our eternal salvation beyond the grave, where we shall be brought to the knowledge of the truth, involved in the promise, and *to know* shall be life eternal. Faith shall then be lost in certainty. Now, if we disbelieve the record, will that make it false? No; our unbelief cannot alter the truth. Let the record, then, be proclaimed to every creature, saying, God has promised and given you eternal life in Christ, before the world began, and calls upon all to believe it. But suppose they should all reject it, saying, We do not believe one word of it, would their unbelief make the promise or record false? No. Would not then the record prove true? It would. Then, the whole world would, of course, receive that eternal life, which is promised and given them in Christ. No, says the objector, they will not believe. But can their unbelief make God's promise of none effect? Can it put that truth out of existence, and make it a falsehood? We would ask the objector, what will they not believe? Answer; they will not believe, that God has given them eternal life in his Son. Very well; then the whole amount of the objection is, that God has given them eternal life in Christ, but they will not

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believe it, and because they will not believe it, they never shall obtain it! Then we must contend (if they never obtain it), that it was never given to them, and if not given, then the record is false; because the record declares, that God has given them eternal life in his Son. It then follows, that their unbelief can make the faithfulness of God without effect, by rendering the record he has given false.

But, says the objector, it ought to be stated conditionally as follows, — God first calls upon men to believe, and if they will believe, then Christ will become their Saviour, and then they will receive eternal life in him, and not before. But does not the objector see, that he has stated *no truth* for them to believe, in order to make Christ their Saviour? I ask, what does God call upon them to believe? There must be some truth presented, before men can be called upon to believe. God calls upon men to believe, what? That Christ is their Saviour? But you said he was not their Saviour, till after they believed. It then follows, according to the objector's statement, that he is not the Saviour of unbelievers. Now, do you not perceive, that if you should call upon them to believe, that he was their Saviour, you would call upon them to believe a lie? — that you would call upon them to believe what did not exist? And what does not

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exist, cannot be true. Grant, says the objector, that he is the Saviour of the world, still, as many as do not believe in him, shall never be saved. But how can he be the Saviour of a man he never saves? Two individuals are drowning in the water; you exert all your power to save them, but fail. Can you call yourself the saviour of those two men, from temporal death? Impossible. In order for Christ to be called the Saviour of the world, he must save the world; otherwise, there is not a shadow of propriety in giving him that name. And John says, "We have seen, and do testify, that the Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world," — "We know, indeed, that this is the Messiah, the Saviour of the world."

In our next, we will conclude this subject, and trust we shall do it to the satisfaction of our readers.

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# SERMON V.

## SALVATION BY FAITH.

[Concluded.]

We now resume the argument in reference to Christ the Saviour of men, as we proposed in our last. We here inquire of the objector,—do you then grant that he is the Saviour of all men,—the Saviour of the world, as the Scriptures declare? If so, we assure you, that he will save the number of whom he is declared to be the Saviour. But, replies the objector, he is not the Saviour of any man till he believes. We ask,—till he believes what? Why, replies the objector, till he believes that Christ is his Saviour,—if he believes so, it will be so. Let us understand this;—you say *he is not* the Saviour of an unbeliever; still he must believe that he *is*, and that will make him so. Then he must first believe a lie and that will create a truth. This is (as Paul says) "turning the truth of God into a lie." But let us notice the record. "This is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son." Do you grant, that God has given eternal life in Christ to every man? No, says the objector. Very well, then they cannot be called upon to believe it. Finally, says the objector, grant that he has.

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This being granted, we would ask, whether they will not come in possession of it, if God's promise stands? Certainly. But, replies the objector, it is not theirs, till they believe. Then the record is not true till they believe it; because, on this principle, they must first believe, that they have eternal life in Christ before it exists, and believing this lie will create it.

But, replies the objector, it is impossible that any man has eternal life given him in Christ, till he believes. We then ask, what truth do you wish him to believe, so that he may obtain this eternal life? The fact is, there is none. He must believe *this truth*, itself, because it is the *record*; but *this*, you have taken from him. You cannot call upon a man to believe, till you admit the existence of that *very truth* you wish him to believe. In order fully to expose the inconsistency of this conditional salvation, we will introduce an example. Suppose a father tell his servant, I have a son in London, nineteen years of age, who is in poverty and distress. I have given him in my will five thousand dollars, and I promise that it shall be put into his possession in two years. It is recorded, and that record *is* true. Go, my servant, and proclaim to him these glad tidings of great joy, and call upon him to believe, so that he may enjoy a salvation by faith during those two years of suspense, and be made happy, even

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amidst his wants, by looking forward to the day when it shall be put into his possession.

The servant sets out on his mission, and honestly believes that he understands his errand. Being arrived, he addresses him as follows, — Son, your father is very rich, and he has not willed you five thousand dollars, nor given it to you on record; and he never will, unless you will *first believe* that he has. But, replies the son, according to your message, if I should believe that he has given me five thousand dollars, I should believe a lie. Let my father first give the money, deposit it in some bank, send me evidence of the fact, and with joy I will believe him. Well, replies the servant, you are a disobedient, stubborn unbeliever! because, if you would only believe so, it would be so, and you would have the money in two years.

You perceive, dear reader, that this servant has presented no truth for this son to believe. He wishes to give him the impression, that the obtaining of this fortune depends on his *believing*, and not on the *testament record*, and *faithfulness* of his father. In fact, he denies the existence of the father's *will*, and the *record*, and requires the son to believe a lie so as to create the truth. The servant does not understand his message, and the son does not know on what certainty to rest for the money.

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In the same manner we are called upon to secure an *interest*, an eternal life, in the Saviour. They will not admit its existence till we *believe*. Then *belief* must create it. But may we spend our last breath in convincing poor sinners that it is already secured in Christ for them, so that they may believe, and live by faith on the Son of God.

This father sends another messenger. He tells this son of the goodness of his father, and that he has *willed* him five thousand dollars, that the *will* is put on record, and that this fortune will be put into his possession in two years. The son does not believe it. Now he is an unbeliever. But does his unbelief alter the truth of the *will* or of the record. No. The certainty of his obtaining the money, rests on the faithfulness of his kind parent. This servant perseveres, uses convincing arguments, and the son at length believes the record, is saved by faith from all his miseries, and rejoices with joy unspeakable. But his *believing* does not make the *record* any more true than it was before he believed it. It simply alters his present condition by kindling in his bosom the joys arising from faith and anticipation. — We have now answered the objections that would naturally be brought forward by those who believe that our eternal salvation is predicated on conditions. As *works* are not the requirements of the Gospel, only so far as they flow from faith in the truth, and as

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*faith* must precede works, therefore the truth of our eternal life in Christ must exist previous to our believing. Consequently all conditions are excluded from the gospel covenant.

We will now meet the objector on the doctrine of election and reprobation, the substance of which is as follows, — After man fell, God was pleased to provide a Saviour for a part of the human family. That elect number he chose in Christ before the foundation of the world, gave them eternal life in him, and for them only he tasted death. The Gospel is now to be preached to the whole world, and as long as they reject it, they are unbelievers. But the elect shall, sooner or later, all be brought to believe.

We will examine the foundation on which this statement rests. To bring it clearly before you, we will take an example. Suppose there is a congregation of one hundred persons. Fifty of them were elected to everlasting life, before the foundation of the world, — were secured by a Saviour, and the rest were reprobated to endless woe. For them no Saviour was designed, and no eternal life ever has, or ever will be, given them in him. Suppose a sermon is preached to those one hundred ; and the fifty, who are elected, believe the record of their eternal life, are brought to the obedience of faith, while the other fifty remain unmoved. The preacher turns upon them and

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pronounces them *unbelievers*. But in what sense are they unbelievers? There has been no truth presented to them, which they disbelieve. Must they believe that Christ is their Saviour, or that they have an eternal life in him? But they would in such case believe a lie. If they believed right the reverse of the elect, — *believed* that God was their enemy and that Christ was not their Saviour, they would be *believers*. But if they believed what the fifty converts did, they would be *unbelievers*. We here repeat one premiss laid down in our last discourse, — viz. In order for any man to be styled a *believer* or *unbeliever*, there must first be presented some *truth* for him to embrace or reject.

Now either God has given us eternal life in Christ before the world began, or he has not. If he has, then we are unbelievers if we reject it. If he has not given it, and should we still believe that he has, we would then believe a lie. But neither our *belief* or *unbelief* can ever alter the truth.

God has "chosen us in Christ before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love; having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will." * * * * * "Having made known unto us the mystery of his will according to his

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good pleasure, which he hath purposed in himself; that in the dispensation of the fulness of times, he might gather together, in one, all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth, even in him." Some apply the above to the elect. But it embraces all things in heaven and earth, which are to be gathered together in Christ, and be new creatures. In addition to this, we will introduce two more passages. "Who hath saved us, and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." "In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began." In these Scriptures we are assured *first*, that God chose us in Christ, before the foundation of the world; *secondly*, that he saved us according to his own purpose and grace, before the world began, and *thirdly*, that he promised eternal life before the world began. These things being embraced in his original plan and purpose, their performance is therefore as certain as that the whole plan of God will be carried into execution.

There is, in my humble opinion, a strange inconsistency in the common doctrine. They contend that on account of the transgression of our first parents, all mankind were fallen creatures, and even came into existence totally depraved. To

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show the justice of God in this constitution of our nature, they contend that Adam was our covenant head, and had he maintained his original purity, we should also have stood perfect in holiness, and no one would have had any reason to complain. Now since Adam has fallen, and involved us in ruin, it is equally just in God, that we should share the fate of our covenant head in the one instance as in the other. But if we make use of this same argument in relation to Christ, the second Adam, — if we contend that he was the covenant head of every man, that the covenant was not made for *this*, but for the *future* world, — that this covenant of grace being made between the Father and the Son, was to stand independent of man, — that eternal life was promised and given us in him before the world began, — that as our covenant head, he resisted all temptations, and perfectly fulfiled the law, — that he died, and appeared alive beyond the tomb, free from temptation, and in a holy and immortal constitution. If we contend for this, making use of their own arguments, saying that it is just as rational that we should appear in the image of Christ in the future world as that we should come into this world in the image of Adam, they will pronounce the argument, so far as applicable to Adam, *sound logic*, but so far as this same argument of theirs is applied by Universalists to Christ, they pronounce it perfect jargon.

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But, says the objector, there is one point you have not settled, and I will here rest the whole of my argument upon it. It is this, — God has in no instance promised eternal life to *unbelievers;* and, unless you can prove that the promise does extend to them, your arguments must fall like rottenness to the ground. We have certainly proved this, and to attend to the objector's request would but be, in some measure, going over the ground already occupied. We will, however, just touch this point again. We will introduce the following words of Paul to Titus. "In hope of eternal life which God that cannot lie promised before the world began."

If God promised his creatures eternal life before the world began, will they not obtain it? They will, for this passage says that he *cannot lie*. But, says the objector, he has not promised it to the unbeliever. We would then inquire, what is it that constitutes him an *unbeliever?* Why do you call him an *unbeliever?* Do you say because he disbelieves the truth of God's promise? Then you must, of course, admit the truth of God's promise to him. If so, it must stand, for God cannot lie. You cannot call upon a sinner *to believe*, until you admit the existence of *that very truth*, you wish him to believe; God's promise of eternal life in Christ, is the gospel we are called upon to believe, with a sincere heart. If you con-

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tend that it is promised to an elect number only, and not to the reprobates, then if they should all be brought to the knowledge of the truth, what would they believe? Ans. The elect would believe the promise of eternal life was made to them, the reprobates would believe right the reverse of the elect, and all would be believers! No, says the objector, the reprobates ought to believe just as the elect do. But in this case, they would believe, that they also had the promise of eternal life. This would be believing a lie, because you say, God has not made them that promise. How would you preach to such persons? If you call upon them to believe the truth of the gospel, which is eternal life, you would call upon them to believe a lie. How can you extricate yourself from this difficulty? But, inquires the objector, how do you know, that God has promised this eternal life to all? Ans. Because the Scriptures do call all men either *believers*, or *unbelievers*, in view of the promise, that God has made. Take away that promise, and belief or unbelief respecting it can no longer have an existence. *Believers* and *unbelievers* would be no more.

But, says the objector, this is not proof, that eternal life is promised to an *unbeliever*. Well, I am surprised at this assertion of my opponent! First, I ask, what do you call a believer? Ans.

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One who believes, that God has promised and given him eternal life in Christ, before the world began. Then of course an *unbeliever* must be one, to whom God has also promised, and given eternal life in Christ before the world began, but who will not believe it. But, says the objector, this cannot be. I would then ask whether eternal life was not promised, and given in Christ to the *believer* before he *believed* it? Certainly. It must have been a truth before he could believe. Well, what was he at that time? An *unbeliever* of course. Then eternal life is promised to all, because it is the lack of faith, in *that never failing promise* of Jehovah, that constitutes an unbeliever. But, says the objector, a man "must *do* so and so," or he cannot be saved. This is not correct; he must *believe* or he cannot be saved. We are saved by faith in the promise, and are permitted to look forward with satisfaction and joy to an immortal existence, where we shall be free from sin, sorrow, and pain. This faith and hope fill the soul with love to God, and induce us to break off our sins by righteousness. So a salvation by faith can only be enjoyed in this life, and is to end, when faith and hope are lost in certainty, and in joy. Though only few are saved by faith, yet all shall know the Lord from the greatest to the least, whom to know is life eternal.

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## SERMON VI.

### THE NEW BIRTH.

"Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." JOHN III. 3.

As we have, in the last three sermons, dwelt particularly on a salvation by faith, we will take the liberty to introduce the subject of the new birth next in order, as it will be more readily retained by the reader in this connexion than otherwise. Indeed, it bears a strong resemblance to them so far as the subject of *faith* is concerned in our present exposition. But whoever is a careful reader of the New Testament will discover, that the subject of faith, and the genuine repentance which that faith produces, are not of trivial moment.

There is no subject of divine revelation, on which more has been said, preached, and written, than the one which we are now about to consider. It has been brought forward by men of talents and erudition, as an insuperable barrier against Universal Salvation, and their several adherents have taken it for granted, that it can never be explained in harmony with the sentiment, that all men shall eventually obtain eternal life through the Redeem-

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er of men. But these impressions have arisen from the fact, that they have taken their own views and explanations to be scripturally correct, and from these premises, they have drawn conclusions utterly opposed to the final holiness and happiness of God's intelligent creation. They have supposed the new birth to be some mysterious change, produced by some mysterious operation of the divine Spirit on the mind, and that it is in substance a miracle.

One denomination has contended, that if a man once obtained this change he was safe, could never "finally fall from grace," but would, eventually, land in the kingdom of immortal glory. Several other denominations admit the new birth to be the same change already noticed, but contend, that the subject may fall from grace and be finally lost. Here, then, the man who was, according to their views, *born again*, might still never see the kingdom of God beyond the grave. On this principle, the new birth would be no security, that any one would obtain heaven. According to this sentiment, a man might be born again, fall away, and be born again, "until seven times," and in the end not see the kingdom of God. Those who advocate this sentiment, believe that *faith* and *repentance* are prerequisites to the new birth, and also believe in the salvation of infants.



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This being so, it will come to pass, that half of the world will be saved, inasmuch as about that number die in what may be justly termed an infant state. But of those who come to years of accountability, they believe but few will be saved. So the greater proportion of those who will finally surround the throne of God, will be those, who have never been born again, according to their views! It will not, I presume, be contended, that infants who, they believe, are totally depraved, ever exercise *faith*, or experience the *new birth* in this life.

From the above views, I shall take the liberty to dissent, and may probably differ some from the expositions given by Universalists. It is evident, that Jesus Christ, in his instructions, frequently brought forward some natural fact, plainly understood by those whom he addressed, in order more clearly to illustrate his subject, and then made his illustrations so nearly resemble that natural fact, that no man could possibly misunderstand him, unless he had been led into tradition by blind guides. In the context, he makes allusion to natural birth, of which every man knows the meaning, and says to Nicodemus, "That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit."

Natural birth presupposes the perfect formation of the human body by that secret energy of na-

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ture, God only can comprehend. But that formation, itself, is not birth. Birth is that operation which introduced us into this world. We are now flesh and blood, which cannot inherit the kingdom of God. What is born of the flesh is flesh. We must now be born again, from mortal to immortality, otherwise we could not see the kingdom of God.

Must not man be born of a woman in order to see this world? Can he look upon the beautiful objects of creation, or contemplate these countless wonders of the Almighty, before he is born into being? He cannot. All without exception will admit, that it is impossible for any man to enter this natural world, in which we live, without birth. So it is equally impossible to enter the kingdom of God, without being born *again* in the strictest sense of the word. A man cannot "be born again" ten, or twenty years, nor even *one day*, before he sees the kingdom of God, any more than he could be born twenty days, before he came forth out of the womb. As natural birth cannot take place any given time, before we enter this world, but is the very thing that introduces us, so a *second birth* cannot take place in a given time, before we enter the kingdom of God, in the next world, but is the *very thing*, that shall introduce us into it; and the moment we shall be born again, we shall see it, — we shall be spirit,

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and beyond the dominion of death and sin. He that is born of the flesh *is flesh*, so long as he lives; and he that is born of the Spirit *is spirit*. As we now "bear the image of the earthy," through a *natural* birth, "so we shall also bear the image of the heavenly," through a *spiritual* birth. And as no man in this world is a spirit, so no man has in reality, passed the new birth. When we were born into this world, we were brought from insensibility to an existence entirely new. So in order to enter the kingdom of God, which is not of this world, we must be born again, from the insensibility of death, into a new and happy existence beyond the grave.

The question now arises, when shall this new birth take place? We reply, when this mortal shall put on immortality, through a resurrection. When we shall be aroused from the sleep of death to a percipient existence in heaven, when we shall awake satisfied with the likeness of God. Paul, in 1 Cor. xv., plainly states, that the spiritual body shall be put on after death. Birth then must *follow*, not *precede*, that spiritual body. It is impossible, that birth should take place, till the body is first prepared. Man's natural body is organized in the womb, and then born into this world. He drops to a state of insensibility, in death; the organization of the spiritual body takes place, to the natural eye imperceptible,

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and in its nature indestructible. It is brought forward through a resurrection, similar to the grain of wheat to which Paul compares it, is awakened to a conscious existence, and bears the image of the heavenly, as it once bore the image of the earthy. The resurrection is therefore every moment going on, and every man is raised in succession.

But, says the reader, if the resurrection be the new birth, then Christ himself must have been born again in order to enter the kingdom of God! Certainly. But, inquires the reader, where do the Scriptures teach, that Christ was ever born again? In Colossians i. 15, are these words, — "Who [Christ] is the image of the invisible God, the *first-born* of every creature." This cannot mean, that he was the first born into this state of existence; but he was the first one whom human eyes ever saw alive beyond the destruction of death, to die no more, and the only one that mortal eye will ever see, for he arose in his natural body, (being the only true witness, appointed of God,) to bring life and immortality to light through the Gospel.

But that passage, says the reader, does not satisfy me, that Christ was born again. Then listen once more, — verse 18, "who is the beginning, the *first-born* from the dead, that in all things, he might have the preëminence." Rev.

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i. 5. "Jesus Christ the faithful witness, and the *first-begotten* from the dead." Here, it is plainly stated, that he is "the *first-born* from the dead," "the *first-begotten* from the dead." These Scriptures, in connexion with several others, that might be quoted, prove that Christ was born again, and that the resurrection is called *birth*.

It is evident, that man falls to a state of insensibility in death, and remains in sleep, till the spiritual body is formed by the power of God, out of those subtle materials, that at death pass into *hades;* and when the organization is completed, the new being is born into the kingdom of immortal glory. A drowning man, we know, falls to a state of unconsciousness. Fainting, — yes, even a night's sleep proves, that the mind is susceptible of falling into insensibility, or suspending its mental operations, and disproves the notion of its entering a future state, only through a resurrection of the dead. This fact is not only substantiated by reason, but it is the doctrine of Revelation. The wise man says, "the dead know not any thing." Paul, in 1 Cor. xv., predicates the truth of our resurrection on the fact, that Christ rose from the dead; and on this ground he reasons, that if there be no resurrection, then preaching is vain, faith is also vain, the Christians were yet in their sins, and they, that were fallen asleep in Christ, were perished; and

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concludes by saying, "let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die." Suppose a Christian should this moment die, and, according to common opinion, enter immediately on an immortal existence. Could we now say, if there be no resurrection, he is fallen asleep in Christ, and perished? No, because, instead of being perished, that is, *annihilated*, he would remain in infinite happiness and glory, even if there should never be any resurrection. So you perceive, that Paul did not believe any one could enter eternity only through a resurrection. He believed, they would fall asleep in Christ, and in that sleep remain, till in Christ they were made alive. He embraces the whole in the following words, — "Since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead."

When the sentence of death was pronounced upon Adam, which was to pass upon all men, the promise of a Saviour then made, was, it appears, not understood. Their posterity looked forward for a temporal king, and had no idea of an immortal existence beyond the "narrow house." Death, the king of terrors, was not yet disarmed of his sting, by the resurrection of our triumphant Redeemer. This truth was not yet revealed to men. Here the human family were without hope, and trembling at the darkness, the sevenfold darkness, of the tomb. No ray of light and

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joy beamed from beyond that cheerless mansion to ease the aching heart, or dispel that melancholy gloom, which pervaded the parental bosom, when gazing for the last time upon the struggles of a dying child.

Here was a world born into existence, under the certain sentence of death, and groaning, in the bondage of corruption, without any hope of being delivered from it, by an immortal birth, "into the glorious liberty of the children of God." In this period of anxiety and distress, the glad tidings were proclaimed to the shepherds on the plains of Judea, announcing the birth of the Saviour of the world. A new birth, which is not mentioned in the *old* Testament, was at length proclaimed by a Saviour in the *new*. He died on the cross, and was "the first-born from the dead."

He is the head of every man, by the grace of God, tasted death for every man, and rose again for their justification. The Scriptures declare, that "we shall be saved by his life;" that he is "the bread of God, that cometh down from heaven, and giveth life to the world." He is our way, our truth, and life, and "because he lives we shall live also." "As in Adam all die, even so in Christ, shall all be made alive," or be born from the dead. And he that is made alive in

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Christ is a new creature; old things are passed away, all things are become new.

But, says the reader, though the resurrection of Jesus is set forth by a birth from death, yet the resurrection of the human family is never so represented. You mistake. Out of the many passages that might be adduced, we have room, in this discourse, for only one. It shall, however, be satisfactory. In Romans, 8th chapter, Paul says, "Because the creature itself, also, shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption, into the glorious liberty of the children of God; for we know, that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now." [We would remark, that the word *creature*, is κτίσις in the Greek, and is the same that is rendered *creation* in the next verse.] In this quotation, you perceive, that Paul represents the whole creation as groaning in travail pains, and declares, that the whole creation shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption, into the glorious liberty of the sons of God. He compares them to a woman travailing in pain, ready for delivery; and that they are delivered from corruption to incorruption at the resurrection is certain. 1 Cor. xv. 42. It is sown in corruption, &c.

You now understand what I mean by the new birth. It is to pass from death to life and immortality, in Christ, beyond the grave, where

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flesh and blood can never enter. For that which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.

We have now pointed out the new birth, and shown that it bears some resemblance to the natural birth, with which Jesus compared it. And how truly sublime and cheering the thought, that the great family of man, who are all born into existence under the certain sentence of death, are to receive a second birth, into an existence entirely new, and that the whole of this dying family are to be made the children of Jesus Christ by adoption. So that he will at last say, here am I and the children thou hast given me.

In our next, we shall notice the change we experience in this life, called in Scripture the new birth, and explain the term, "kingdom of God."

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# SERMON VII.

## THE NEW BIRTH.

[Continued.]

In our last we have shown, that the *spiritual* birth bears some resemblance to a *natural* birth, with which Jesus compared it; and as the *first* introduced us into this world, so the *second* will introduce us into the future and immortal world, at the resurrection, where we shall be as the angels of God in heaven, "be the *children* of God, *being the children of the resurrection.*" There, we shall be completely free from sin and pain. There, the gushing tear of sorrow shall cease to flow, and the brow of disconsolate humanity be ruffled no more.

We will now attend to the present effects, that the truth of this birth has upon us here, and notice, at the same time, the phrase, "*kingdom of God.*"

The question now arises; do not some experience the new birth in this life? They do. But in what sense do they experience it? Ans. by *faith.* In this world we pass from death to life; not that we have actually been in the grave, and brought to life beyond it; but the believer experiences this by faith. And *this faith* has a

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most powerful and happy influence on his affections, and consequently on his life and conduct. All that God has revealed for the salvation of the world; our justification, our sanctification, our new birth, our heaven, our all; yes, all these important and heavenly changes are summed up, and embraced in our immortal resurrection, and will actually take place through death; and while in this world we can embrace them *only by faith.* The Scriptures declare, that "we walk by faith and not by sight." Paul says, "the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me." Paul knew, that he had eternal life given him in Christ, before the world began, and faith in that glorious truth produced a happiness, a divine life in his heart, called the kingdom of God within. Let us notice these several points. First; "Christ rose again, for our justification." Our justification, then, exists in our resurrection state, and will *there*, in all its reality, take place. But cannot a man be justified *here?* Yes; he can be justified *through faith* in *that truth.* Second; "By the which will, we are *sanctified* through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ, once for all." Our *santification*, then, by the will of God, will take place through death. But, cannot a man *be sanctified* while *here?* Yes; he can be sanctified *through faith* in *that truth.*

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Third; Christ was "put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit." So in his resurrection he passed from death to life, and thus revealed the truth, that we shall also pass from death to life, by the power of God, and be like him who is the "first-fruits." But, cannot a man pass from death to life, while on earth? Yes; he can pass from death to life, *through faith* in *that truth*. Jesus says; "He that heareth my word and believeth on him that sent me *hath* everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation, but is passed from death unto life." Fourth; our eternal life will be realized beyond death. "The things that are not seen are spiritual and eternal." But, can we not enjoy it *here?* Yes; "He that believeth on the Son *hath* everlasting life;" that is, he enjoys it by faith. Fifth; Christ was the "first-born from the dead." So we, also, shall pass the reality of the new birth. But can we not enjoy it here? Yes; John says, "For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world, and this is the victory, that overcometh the world, *even our faith*."

Thus it is evident, that a man may in this life be *justified*, *sanctified*, pass from *death to life*, *may enjoy eternal life*, and *be born again*, through faith in *these several correspondent truths*. His faith, however, can make them no more *certain*; because they *must exist*, and be solemn and unal-

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terable truths, before he can be called upon to believe them. If we are not, in our resurrection, to be *justified*, *sanctified*, *born again*, and obtain *eternal life*, then we cannot be *justified*, *sanctified*, or *born again here*, through faith in those truths; because there would be no such truths in existence for us to exercise faith in. If the objector will not allow these truths unalterably to exist *previous* to believing, what then will he call upon us to believe? Will he call upon us to believe, that we have an eternal life in Christ, when no such truth exists, and contend, that our believing this lie will create the truth? This would be the most ridiculous absurdity.

But the truth exists, and the believer by faith enjoys it beforehand. He enjoys it by anticipation, not in *reality*. It can be brought to his understanding or experience no other way only through the gospel medium of faith. I challenge the objector, to show me, between the lids of the New Testament, any regeneration, new birth, justification, or sanctification, that has already taken place in any other sense than through faith. All these things in their *reality*, are to take place in our resurrection, when we shall be like the angels of God, and by faith we bring them present to our minds, and enjoy them *here*. Dr. Watts says,

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"Faith brings distant prospects home,
Of things a thousand years ago,
Or thousand years to come."

Paul, therefore, exhorts us to forget the things that are behind, and reach forward to those that are before, to press to the mark, &c., because the reality, the object of our faith, lies before us. But persons, who do not understand the operations of faith on the mind, in view of its correspondent truth, and who honestly believe, that the new birth has in reality already taken place with them, are always looking back to the time they were born again, and telling over their "old experiences." Now this is right in them, if they have passed through the *reality*; for every man ought to look to the substance, in which he exercises faith and hope. But certainly the Scriptures exhort us to look forward, and anchor our faith and hope within the vail, where our forerunner hath for us entered. It is therefore certain, that the reality exists there, and is yet to come. Such persons, then, in looking back to their experience, are mistaking the birth produced by faith, for the real birth itself. This is just as unreasonable, as it would be to suppose that the foretaste we sometimes enjoy of immortal life, was that life itself. It is true, we at times enjoy a heaven on earth. But, as it respects the kingdom of immortal glory, "eye hath not seen, ear heard,

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neither hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive the glory, that shall be revealed in us." The reality is therefore yet to come, and by faith we receive only an antepast of its joys.

From the above observation we infer, that the resurrection is the only gospel faith and hope of a future, happy conscious state of being. When our minds are enlightened to see the mighty changes, that we mortals are represented in the Scriptures of truth as destined to experience, by being raised in a holy and deathless constitution, we are then led to consider the resurrection as embracing all those realities, which we are called upon by Jesus Christ and his apostles to embrace by faith and enjoy in this life. So great and sublime is the gift of God, and so far surpassing thought does it magnify the perfections of the divine character, and in so amiable a light does it manifest his love to the children of men, that a living faith in its reality cannot but exert a salutary influence on our life and conversation. So much stress did the apostles lay upon its importance, that they went everywhere preaching the resurrection of the dead, as the Gospel of Christ.

There is one point, we will here notice. All denominations acknowledge, that for any man, *by faith*, to pass from death to life, is a change for

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the better. If so, then the *reality*, namely, to pass from the sleep of death to an immortal existence, must be a change for the better. Because it is by believing that future reality we are said to have passed from death to life here. The conclusion is, unavoidable, that the *reality* must correspond with its antepast enjoyed *by faith*. To understand this, let us reverse it. Suppose it should be an established law in the nature and constitution of things, that all mankind should pass from death to immortal misery in the future world. Let this be revealed and proclaimed as an unchanging truth. As many as believed it, would of course pass from death to immortal misery in *faith*, which would lead them to curse the Being who made them and destined them to this unhappy end. It would be a change for the worse.

Our subject is now so far plain (according to our views), that the phrase "*kingdom of God*" will be readily understood. Though it has, by different writers, been made to bear many different significations, yet we shall take the liberty to contend, that it has only *two*, and simply means as follows. First, an immortal existence beyond the grave, brought to light by the resurrection of Christ; and, second, a belief in *that reality* is the kingdom of God we here enter and enjoy



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*by faith.* Into this kingdom infants, idiots, heathen, and unbelievers do not enter, because faith is the only condition. This is the kingdom of heaven that men, blind leaders of the blind, shut up. They neither enter themselves, nor suffer those that would enter to go in. They keep the evidence of the reality out of sight, so that men cannot look beyond the vail to its brighter glories, and enjoy its peaceful reign in their hearts by faith. When faith is lost in certainty, *then* this kingdom will be delivered up, and to *know*, shall be life eternal. This definition we believe will hold good, and apply to any passage in the New Testament where it may occur. Though some contend, that it very seldom has reference to an immortal existence, yet we strenuously contend, that there is no propriety in the phrase, only in connexion with such an existence. We cannot enter, or be born into the kingdom of God by faith, unless we admit the reality in the first place to have an existence, any more than we could, by faith, enjoy eternal life, unless there is such a reality as eternal life beyond the grave. The above, the reader will please to fix in his mind.

We now perceive, that man drops into the sleep of death, and that the resurrection or new birth is his only hope of a future happy state of existence, and is the only change that can free

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him from imperfection and sin, and make him a new creature, in a new and immortal existence beyond the grave.

We will here introduce an example to make our argument so far plain. Suppose you were now in ignorance respecting the doctrine of life and immortality, through a resurrection. You know you must die, and sincerely think, that death will terminate your existence forever. You see your children, one after another, laid upon their dying bed, and with distraction shake the farewell hand of eternal separation, and, with the most solemn melancholy and woe, look forward to the period, when you must follow them down to the chambers of eternal silence, and cease to be.

In this moment of dread, solemnity, and gloom, suppose some kind angel should appear at the bedside of your last expiring child, and kindly inquire, why are you troubled? You answer, because my children have fallen! the last of my infant train lies panting for breath, and the dreadful hour has come, when all those silken affections, which bind our hearts in love, must be rent asunder, and, in the awful bosom of death, be extinguished forever! Suppose your guardian angel, smiling over the ruins of death, should point you far beyond these changing scenes, and with rapture exclaim, You shall meet this darling child

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again and commingle with your little fallen flock in glory! You and they and all mankind shall be born from the dead into the kingdom of God, and be new creatures, free from sin and pain, and "be the children of God, being the children of the resurrection." Jesus your Lord "was the first-born from the dead," and you shall pass from death to life and live forever.

Now suppose you positively believed his words; could you not say in the Scripture form of the expression, that through faith you was already "passed from death to life"? that you was born of faith, and by faith was in the kingdom of God? You certainly could, and it would in every sense of the word be true. Through faith you would be justified, through faith sanctified; through faith you would enjoy eternal life, in fine, through faith you would be saved. This faith would give you love unmeasured to your Creator, and fill your soul with joy unspeakable and full of glory. "Faith works by love, purifies the heart, and overcomes the world."

Reader, do you not love the Lord for his wonderful goodness to his children? What glorious hopes are here! "and he that hath this hope in him purifieth himself even as he is pure;" you now see why the Gospel rings with the word *faith* from one end to the other.

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The world, previous to the coming of Jesus Christ, had no knowledge of immortality through a resurrection into the kingdom of God. The phrase "*born again*," is not mentioned in the Old Testament, and of course means something more than *conversion*. This subject will be continued in our next.

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## SERMON VIII.

### THE NEW BIRTH.

[Continued.]

THE literal rendering of this passage seems to be,—*except a man be born above.* The word *above* being substituted for *again*, more forcibly demonstrates the correctness of my views in the two former discourses.

Many charge the Universalists with denying the necessity of a new birth, or regeneration. But take from me my faith and hope in that glorious truth, and I must at that moment resign the salvation of every human being. Convince me that not another child will be born into this world, and you will, at once, convince me that this world will shortly be destitute of every solitary inhabitant. Convince me that a man will not be born again, and you will not only convince me that no one will ever enter the kingdom of God, but that the many souls, that have already passed from the stage of mortal being, and those that shall hereafter follow, will alike be consigned to eternal silence! Endless misery is out of the question. That could have had no existence, even had there been no resurrection in HIM who is the LIFE of the world; but death would have terminated the ex-

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istence of all. Such a punishment is not threatened in all the writings of Moses and the prophets. And we cannot reasonably suppose, if such were a principal truth in revelation, that God would suffer four thousand years to elapse without warning his creatures of such an awful doom. Upon our first parents, for transgressing the law, he pronounced all the miseries of life, and uttered the closing sentence, "Dust thou art and unto dust shalt thou return." Here the doctrine of endless misery (if that be the sentence of the violated law) ought to have been clearly stated to the "covenant head" of our race, so that the same sentence might pass upon all that have sinned, unless they complied with the conditions set before them.

But we leave this point, and will notice the 5th verse, which may, perhaps, be considered as an objection to my views, and urged as proof that the new birth is wholly confined to this life. "Except a man be born of *water*, and of the spirit," &c. What is here meant by "*water*"? Ans. Baptism by immersion. This, instead of being an objection to my views, strengthens them. Baptism in water is nothing more than a *figure* of our death and resurrection, by *which* we manifest our *faith* in the resurrection of the dead, by which *faith* our hearts are baptized into the spirit and truth of the gospel of Christ.

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Paul says, 1 Cor. xv. 29, "Else what shall they do, which are baptized for the dead, if the dead rise not at all? why are they then baptized for the dead?" Baptism being a *figure* of our death and resurrection, is perhaps, in a gospel sense, of as much consequence to Christians in the present as in former days.

Christ went to John and was baptized of him in Jordan. His being put under water signified his death, when the condemning power of the law under the first dispensation should lose its force, —and his being raised out of the water signified his resurrection from the cold Jordan of death to immortal life in the kingdom of God, where the victory shall be sung over *death* and *sin*; and over the *law*, which "is the strength of sin." Having passed in figure through his own death and resurrection, and having manifested to man that he was baptized by the Holy Spirit into the faith and "powers of the world to come," he perfectly lived up to his obligation, by never committing one sin. He went through life free from transgression, as though he were already in eternity. When his crucifixion hour approached, he said, [Luke xii. 50,] "I have a baptism to be baptized with, and how am I straitened" [Greek, —*pained*] "till it be accomplished." Here he had reference to his being buried in death, and

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rising again from it, which would be the *reality* of which his baptism in Jordan was but a *figure*.

To be put under water signifies our *death*, and to be raised out again signifies our *resurrection*. A person who is baptized ought therefore to endeavour, as much as in him lies, to live as though he were already in his resurrection state. Enjoying in faith the baptism of the "Holy Spirit and of fire," he ought to consider himself as dead to the world and alive to God, walking in newness of life.

Let us introduce Rom. vi. 3, 4. "Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ, were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death; that like as Christ was raised up from the dead, by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life." Here we perceive they were baptized into *his death*, and were rejoicing in hope of the *resurrection*, having their hearts purified by faith in the reality. Acts xxii. 16; "And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins," &c. Now, it is not only a Scripture doctrine, but all denominations acknowledge, that baptism in water is an *emblem* of the washing away of our sins. We then ask; are our sins to be washed in a stream of water? No. Where then? The objector says, our sins are taken away *in this life*, by the

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baptism of the "Holy Spirit, and with fire." This cannot be; because Paul told the believers, that if there were no resurrection, their faith was vain, and they were *yet in their sins.* [See 1 Cor. xv. 17.] This proves, that believers receive the forgiveness of their sins in this life *by faith only*, not in *reality*.

The question returns, are our sins washed away in a stream of water? No. Where then! Ans. Through death and the resurrection, for that is the real baptism. And it is certain, that the *reality* must embrace all that the *figure* in water teaches. We then solemnly ask the reader, if baptism in water is a *figure* of our death and resurrection, and if *that water baptism* signifies the washing away of our sins, will not then our sins be washed away through death and the resurrection? Yes; otherwise the figure in water has no meaning.

Thus we perceive, that being born of the water is no objection to our views of the new birth, but affords them an unshaken support. If any one contend, that the sins of our race are not to be taken away through death, we would then ask, where will the Christian's sins be washed away? The Scriptures declare, that "there is not a just man upon earth, that doeth good and sinneth not," and if there is no change through death, then there will not be a just man beyond the grave,

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that doeth good and sinneth not. But the baptism with "the Holy Spirit, and with fire," in all its solemn and interesting reality, will take place through death and the resurrection; and to exercise a living faith in that truth, so as to influence our life and conduct according to the spirit of the Gospel, is what the Scriptures term being baptized with the Spirit, and with fire, in this life. But this present enjoyment is not the *reality*, but an antepast of *that reality*; because "we walk by faith, and not by sight." It is immaterial whether the Scripture speaks of *pardon*, of *justification*, of *sanctification*, of *redemption*, of *regeneration*, or *baptism* "with the Holy Spirit and with fire," it simply means, that those facts in the divine counsels unchangeably exist, and will burst upon the whole groaning creation in the resurrection world, while the believer only enjoys them in this state of being through faith, which baptizes him into the spirit of Christ. But, if there be no resurrection, and nought is presented to our anticipation but the dreary prospect of a beamless eternity, then "preaching is vain," "faith is also vain," "Christians are yet in their sins," "and they that are fallen asleep in Christ are perished."

The taking away the sin of the world by the Lamb of God, who is the resurrection and the life, is through death. Through death, to our

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faith and hope, he has destroyed "him who hath the power of death, that is, the devil." The washing away of all sin, by the power of God, is through death and the resurrection. *Then*, and not till *then*, shall the song of triumph be sung by redeemed millions, — "O death! where is thy sting? O grave! where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law," &c.

All the figures of baptism point to *death*, all the sacrifices for sin, slain under the law for four thousand years, point to death, declaring that without the shedding of blood there is no remission. There the reality lies. There we are called upon to anchor our faith and hope, even within the veil. And it must be a *certain truth*, that our sins are to be washed away through the Jordan of death, before we can be called upon to believe it. It must be a *certain reality*, that sin is there to be purged away, before we could, with any propriety, use baptism in water as a shadow of it; because the *shadow* cannot create the *substance*.

We have now shown, that as man is naturally born into this world, so he shall be spiritually born into the kingdom of God. We have shown by comparison, that except a man be born of a woman he cannot see this world; and, as this does not mean, that he must be born twenty days be-

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fore he comes forth from the womb, as a preparation for entering this world, so the expression, "except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God," does not mean, that he must be born twenty days before death as a preparation for entering a future existence. The new birth, no more means a *reality*, that is to transpire *here*, than natural birth means some change we underwent prior to our being brought forth into life.

I believe in all the reformation or new birth *here*, that others do, and believe in much more to come. That change *here*, which they call the new birth, I call the new birth in faith, or being born of faith, while the solemn reality is yet to transpire, and that is to be born from the dead in Christ our head. These facts we will now make plain to every reader by the following example, so that our views on this subject may not be misrepresented.

Suppose that before we were born we had been able to conceive ideas. And suppose it had been spoken to us by the Son of God; Except you are born of the flesh, you cannot see the natural world, which is most beautiful to behold, having sun, moon, and stars, and songsters, fields, and groves. It has never entered your heart to conceive the glory to be revealed in you. Now suppose some of us had believed this revelation, we would, that moment, have been born

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of faith, and rejoiced in hope of the glory to be revealed in us; and by faith have looked forward to the reality. This, however, would not have made our birth any more certain, because it must have been an absolute truth before we could have, with any propriety, believed it. Suppose, further, that some of us had rejected it; would this circumstance have prevented our being born? Certainly not. All of us, who believed, would have been born of faith, having an earnest of the reality, and the unbelievers would have come short of that enjoyment by faith; but their unbelief could in no sense make the truth of none effect. The moment we were born, belief and unbelief would be lost in certainty.

Now suppose, that some of us had said, the Son of God has declared, "except we are born of the flesh, we cannot see the natural world." This must mean some great change we are to experience in the womb; we must be born some number of days before we enter the natural world, as a preparation, otherwise we can never see it.

We now ask the reader, whether it would not be folly to give to the word *birth*, such an explanation? The conclusion is unavoidable. We then ask, whether it does not involve the same folly to contend, in view of our text, ("except a man be born again, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God,") that it means, he must be

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born again in this world, as a preparation for another ? It certainly does.

We once more repeat it, that as natural birth was the *very thing* that introduced us all into *this* world of imperfection, sorrow, and pain ; so the spiritual birth will be the *very thing* that shall introduce us all into *another*, where imperfection, sorrow, and pain shall be no more.

The poor heathen, and infants, and all, will therefore be born again into the kingdom of God, and " be equal unto the angels, die no more, and be the children of God, *being the children of the resurrection.*" The only advantage we enjoy above them is, that we have heard the good news, believed it, are " born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God which liveth and abideth forever," and " have entered into rest." We are rejoicing in hope of the glory of God to be revealed in us, while they are groping in darkness, inasmuch as they cannot believe in him of whom they have not heard.

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## SERMON IX.

### THE NEW BIRTH.

[Concluded.]

In our last three discourses we have endeavoured to lay our views of the new birth, thus far, plainly before the reader, and wish him to bear in mind, that the three sermons preceding those on the new birth, are also to be read, and carefully kept in view, so that, from the whole connexion, the Gospel doctrine of salvation by *faith* may be made clear to his understanding. We have dwelt so long, and laid so much stress upon *faith*, because it is the *first* Christian grace we are exhorted to put on, and is the *first* assent of the mind, to the great and interesting *truth* revealed in the Gospel of Jesus Christ, which is *life* and *immortality* for the human family.

We have shown, that the new birth has a higher signification, than simply to be converted from the evil of our doings, as was required under the first dispensation. The new birth, so far as it concerns the present existence, embraces not only *conversion*, but the whole spiritual *life* of the Christian's soul, denominated the kingdom of heaven within. This mental felicity, this "weight of glory," cannot be enjoyed, but by the exercise

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of a living faith in Christ. Such a faith begets a sincere obedience in our life and conversation. It is a faith "that works by love, purifies the heart, and overcomes the world." The great apostle to the Gentiles exclaims, "The life that I now live in the flesh, I live by the *faith* of the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me." We, therefore, "walk by *faith*, not by *sight*."

We have shown, that Christ was the "*first-born* from the dead," to show light to the people and to the Gentiles, and that the whole creation is groaning in travail-pains, and that it shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God, and that we shall then be as the angels of God in heaven. We have shown, that all mankind, infants, idiots, and heathen, shall be brought to realize this birth, and that the believer, only, can enjoy it in this state of existence through *faith* in the truth, and that this *faith* has a most powerful influence on his life and conversation, "being born of incorruptible seed, by the word of God, that liveth and abideth forever." We have shown, that neither this birth, nor any of the spiritual changes, can be experienced in this life only through *faith* in their correspondent truths, even as they are revealed to us in the Gospel of Christ. We have shown, that by the phrase, "kingdom of heaven,"



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we were to understand, *first*, a holy, happy, and immortal existence beyond the grave," incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved for us in heaven," and which, with all its perfections and joys, was revealed to us by Jesus Christ; and, *second*, a sincere and living *faith* in this interesting *reality*, produced that divine enjoyment, called "the kingdom of heaven within us," the kingdom of heaven among men, &c. This kingdom the Pharisees "shut up," they "neither entered it themselves, nor suffered those that were entering to go in." That is, they prevented the people from *believing* those interesting *realities*, those sublime doctrines of a future world, that their Messiah had brought to light through the Gospel, for the present happiness of men.

We have shown, that water baptism is but a *figure*, a *shadow* of our death and resurrection, or of the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit, and that this figure is important to us even in this present day. In fine, we have shown, that if there were no future existence, if nought were held up to man, but the dreary prospect of a beamless eternity, he could not be justified, sanctified, born again, pass from death to life, or enter the kingdom of God through faith, because in such case the *objects* of his *faith* and *hope* would be annihilated, his faith would be

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vain, he would be yet in his sins. In this view of our subject, we perceive that Christ is but the "author and finisher of our faith," having been ordained of God "to bring life and immortality to light," to set us an example for our imitation and happiness here below, and to die and rise in attestation of the truth involved in his mission. Consequently his kingdom will be delivered up when *faith* and *hope* shall be lost in certainty and joy.

It now remains, that we urge the importance of the *new birth* through faith in the truth. And here we shall probably meet with one objection from the reader, viz. as we argued in Sermons III., IV., and V., that faith was the first exercise of the creature, and that no one could *believe* or *disbelieve* what he pleased, the reader may then ask, What necessity is there of urging the importance of the new birth through faith in the truth, inasmuch as faith cannot be exercised at the *pleasure*, or simply at the *will*, of man? And here we would remark, that the guilt of unbelief does not consist in rejecting a truth after patient investigation, by collecting all the evidences in our reach; but it consists in rejecting a truth without examination of its evidences. For instance, let the Gospel be preached to a heathen, who rejects it without attempting to acquaint himself with the evidences upon which its truth is

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based. He is condemned for not believing, because he neglects the only means by which he might be convinced of the truth. He declines searching for evidence. Of the truth of this remark we have a striking instance in the Scriptures. Paul preached at Thessalonica, but they heeded not his words. He preached also at Berea, and the inspired penman says, "These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the Scriptures daily, whether these things were so." It is our duty to search the Scriptures prayerfully and "labor to enter into that rest that remains to the people of God, lest any of us through unbelief should seem to come short of it." It is our duty to search for evidence of the truth, at least, on all subjects relating to our present happiness, and particularly those that appertain to the future world. They are too momentous to be treated with indifference.

There is nothing more important than that we should exercise a *living* faith in a future and happy existence beyond the grave. This alone can afford the mind "joy unspeakable and full of glory." There is in every human bosom an unceasing uneasiness, an aching void, that nothing on earth can satisfy or fill. Old and young, ignorant and learned, heathen and Christian, feel the same dissatisfaction with the objects of momentary de-

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ration. The heathen, in the midst of all his self-denials and self-tortures to appease his gods, and in the conscientious discharge of all his devotional duties, is still a dissatisfied and miserable being. God has so constituted the human mind, that it cannot repose in error, however sincere may be the faith it exercises. There is still a gnawing vacuum within, that nothing but the powers of truth can fill. Philosophy has endeavoured to search out that system of moral duties, in the rigid performance of which, that happiness, peace, and joy might be found, for which all mortal beings pant, with the same aspirations of strong desire, but has sought in vain. From the earliest ages, one system after another has been invented, and in succession abandoned, but all have come short of discovering any thing solid on which to rest their hopes of earthly felicity.

Jesus Christ, the author and finisher of our faith, has alone accomplished what all the penetration of Pythagoras, and all the moral lessons of Seneca and Socrates, failed to discover. With a bold, firm, and untrembling hand he has drawn aside the curtains of the tomb, and pointed the human family to a second birth from the dark womb of death into mansions of incorruptible felicity in the kingdom of God, where they shall die no more, and where all the inquietudes, appertaining to this fleeting existence, shall be unknown. This

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future state of being he has not only revealed, but has demonstrated its certainty by those incontestible evidences, which can never be shaken by all the powers of infidelity combined. He has burst the icy bands of death and risen triumphant beyond its solemn shade, and begotten in us those lively hopes, those fond desires, that ease the aching heart, — that communicate unbroken peace amidst the various ills of life, and afford it divine consolation and joy in the trying moment of death. In those interesting truths the believer confides, and in every condition in life is enabled to rejoice in the hope, that when "this earthly tabernacle is dissolved, he has a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." In this faith, man's countless wants are satisfied, inasmuch as God has secured his dearest interest. In this faith the believer is entered into rest, is born of God, and is translated into his kingdom. He *knows*, that by faith he has passed from death unto life, for his soul is filled with love to God and man. This love, this divine enjoyment, is the natural effect of *faith*, inasmuch as it works by love, purifies the heart, and overcomes the world. He is not only at rest respecting himself, but at rest respecting his children and dear friends, whom he may be called to follow to the land of silence and the shadow of death. He stands at their dying bed and whispers to them consolation,

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in the joyful assurance, that he shall meet them again beyond the dominion of death and pain in the regions of glory. His bosom is the mansion of those pure and holy affections and of those sublime hopes, that none can know but those who are thus born into the kingdom of God.

Reader, you must die. How important then that you should faithfully and prayerfully examine the Scriptures, so that tormenting fears, distraction, and despair may not in that solemn moment, rend the peace of your bosom to atoms. A sweet peace and composure of soul in that trying hour, are of incalculable worth. It is enough to struggle with physical pain without the addition of mental woes, which present neglect, and your ignorance of the truth and consolations of the gospel of Christ, are sure to bring upon you. Perhaps you are a father, and may be called to stand at the death-bed of a beloved child. That child may call upon you as a parent to administer consolation to its departing spirit. He clings to life, or ardently desires to live forever in the mansions of rest beyond the grave. But what consolation can you impart, if you are yourself ignorant of the doctrines of the gospel of Christ? The heart-rending prospect of endless wo, or the gloomy horrors of annihilation, could afford no consolation to that mind, which has the principles of glory deeply rooted in its nature, and which nothing

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but the continuance of existence can rationally satisfy. As you value unbroken peace in the hour of dissolution, and as you value the happiness of these dear pledges heaven has lent you, study for the evidence of Christian truth, search the Scriptures, and labor to enter into that rest that remains here to the believing people of God, who are born again and *specially* saved through *faith* in the truth.

This labor is not only important in view of the solemn hour of death, but important in view of the life you here live in the flesh. Happiness is the ultimate pursuit of all mortal beings. They vainly imagine, that it can be found in riches, honors, and titles; yes, even imagine that it can be found in the hard ways of the transgressor. Though sensible, that worlds before them have failed, and gone down to the grave with the pangs of disappointed hope, yet man is so strangely inconsistent as still to believe, that these earthly pursuits contain some hidden charm, which he flatters himself he shall find, even though all before him have failed. Here is the delusion, kind reader, of which you are cautioned to beware. There is no happiness but in the path where the hand of mercy has sown it, no happiness but in the objects where God has placed it. It is nowhere to be found but in the enjoyment of the religion of Christ. This will sweeten every earth-

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ly pursuit, make every burden light, afford solid enjoyment in life, and divine consolation in the hour of death. Flatter not yourself that there is any happiness beneath the sun, aside from this. "There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked," and he who says there *is* contradicts Jehovah, and is yet "in the gall of bitterness and in the bond of iniquity." A speculative faith is of but little consequence, so long as it does not influence our life and conversation for the better. We must believe to the saving of the soul from the evil of the world. "Then shall thy light break forth as the morning, and thy righteousness shall go before thee, and the glory of the Lord shall be thy rere-ward."

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## SERMON X.

### ON A GOOD NAME.

"A good name is rather to be chosen than great riches, and loving favor rather than silver and gold." PROV. XXII. 1.

A GOOD name involves all that can render man exalted and amiable, or life desirable. The good opinion of mankind has, in all ages, been considered as a blessing of the first magnitude, and has, in various ways, been sought for by all. There is no man so dishonest, but that he labors to impress upon others the conviction of his honesty; no man so deceptive, but that wishes to be considered sincere; nor cowardly, but desires to be reputed brave; and no man is so abandonedly vicious, but that he desires to be considered virtuous by his fellow-creatures. All choose a *good* name in preference to a *bad* one. This being a fact, the appearance of virtue is kept up where the reality is wanting, and the shadow is often mistaken for the substance.

There are many at heart insincere and false, who pass in society generally for persons of sincerity, candor, and virtue, while their real principles are known only in their own families, and among their confidential friends. They desire a good name, and outwardly maintain it, while they

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in reality but little deserve it. In order to know what a man *really* is, we must be acquainted, not only with his *public* but his *private* character. In his own family every man appears what he really is. There the heart, word, and action are in unison. They embrace each other. In public, they too often separate; and the word, or action, speaks what its divorced companion, the heart, does not feel.

Such not only literally choose, but often bear, a good name. But this is not the choice suggested in the text. All men, even the most vicious, in some sense or other, choose a good name. But the passage under consideration has a higher, a nobler aim, than a mere *choice*, unconnected with virtuous principle and action. It has a higher aim, than to encourage men to be rotten at heart, and by an outward, hypocritical manœuvre, maintain a good name among their fellow-creatures. By the text, we are to understand, that a man should early cultivate, in his heart, a virtuous principle, as the pure source from which all those outward actions spring, that justly merit the esteem of mankind, force approbation even from the vicious, and thus entitled him to that good name, which is far above all price. This will not only afford its possessor unbroken peace, arising from the inward consolations and joys of virtuous sincerity, but it will also open to him another rich

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fountain of felicity, arising from the consideration, that he enjoys the confidence and esteem of the *great* and the *good*, with whom he is conversant in life, of his intimate friends, of his companion and children, and above all, the smiles of kind heaven and the approbation of his God. His life is calm; his sleep is sweet and associated with golden dreams. No fearful spectres haunt his brain, but the kind angel of mercy is ever at his side. He looks forward to death undismayed, yes, with satisfaction and composure looks beyond that dark scene, to brighter worlds and more substantial joys. He feels the assurance, that even when he shall be here no more, his name shall live in the hearts of those he left behind, be embalmed in the memory of the just, and that it is beyond the power of rolling ages to sully it. *This* is what we understand by *choosing a good name*, as stated in our text.

Of the truth of this, there can arise no misapprehension when we compare it with the subsequent phrase, with which it is contrasted; "a good name is rather to be chosen than *great riches*, and loving favor rather than *silver* and *gold*." By the *choosing* of riches, we are to understand, not only a *desire* to obtain them, but, that this desire shall be sufficiently strong to prompt us to use all the honorable and efficient means in our power to accumulate them. The wise man did not

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mean, that every man had the offer of a fortune, and could possess himself of it by simply making choice of it, independent of means. No, his choice must be manifested by industry and economy. The means must be used to secure the end. Just so in acquiring a good name. The person desirous of obtaining it, must pursue that upright and virtuous course of conduct, which alone could insure it. And just as well might a man expect riches by being indolent and extravagant, as to expect a good name by indulging in every species of vice. We are therefore to understand our text thus; A *good name*, through pursuing a virtuous course of conduct, is rather to be chosen than *great riches*, through the plans and means by which they are obtained.

Man is a being of many wants, and, to supply them, he is too much inclined to forsake the path of virtue, and resort to dishonorable means to obtain wealth.

In view of this master-passion for earthly splendor and greatness, Solomon uttered the words of our text, to recall the giddy mind from its chase of shadows, and turn it to the only source of unmingled felicity, in the pursuit of virtue. This would afford the mind those rational delights, that wealth, with all its dazzling splendors, cannot impart. It does not possess the charm to convey unbroken peace to the heart.

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But there is a strong inducement to engage in a virtuous course, because it is the surest road to wealth and honor. The thief and robber were never rich, nor could they be happy if they were. An excellent writer observes, the importance of a good character in the commerce of life seems to be universally acknowledged. To those who are to make their own way either to wealth or honors, a good character is as necessary as address and ability. Though human nature is often degenerate, and corrupts itself by many inventions, yet it usually retains to the last an esteem for excellence. But, even if we arrive at such an extreme degree of depravity as to have lost our native reverence for virtue, yet, a regard to our own interest and safety will lead us to apply for aid, in all important transactions, to men whose integrity is unimpeached. When we choose an assistant or a partner, our first inquiry is concerning his character. When we have occasion for a counsellor, an attorney, or a physician, whatever we may be ourselves, we always choose to trust our property and lives to men of the best character. When we fix on the tradesman, who is to supply us with necessaries, we are influenced by fair reputation and honorable dealing. Young men, therefore, whose characters are yet unfixed, and who consequently may render them just such as they wish, ought to pay great attention to the

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first steps they take on entrance into life. They are usually careless and inattentive to this object. They pursue their own plans with ardor, and neglect the opinions which others entertain of them. By some thoughtless action or expression, they suffer a mark to be impressed upon them, which no subsequent merit can entirely erase. Every man will find some persons, who, though they are not professed enemies, yet view him with an eye of envy, and who would gladly revive any tale to which truth has given the slightest foundation.

Though a good name is rather to be chosen than great riches, and is the surest road to wealth, yet there are thousands, who pay but little attention to possess themselves of so valuable a treasure. They turn a deaf ear to that hallowed voice, which pleads with them in behalf of their dearest interest, and take the downward road of dissipation and vice, and, by their wretched example, lead other thousands to the dark abodes of sorrow, grief, and pain. Enchanted by the siren voice of false and fleeting pleasure, they hurry to that tremendous precipice, where reputation and fortune lie in broken ruins. There they drag out a wretched existence in disappointed hope, satiety, and disgust. They pay their devotions at the shrine of ignominy, where the dark and stagnant waters of guilt and damnation roll. There

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the sweet voice of heaven-born peace was never heard, and the beauteous feet of religion never trod! There dwells the family of pain; there is the hell we are cautioned to avoid. This is not an illusion of fancy, it is no reverie of the brain, but a reality too visible in the pathway of human life.

Thousands, in this condition, are hurrying to a premature grave, and go down to that dark abode covered with infamy, having robbed themselves of all the substantial joys, that a virtuous conduct and a good unsullied name are calculated to awaken in the heart. Dissipation darkens the brightest prospects of life. It rolls its floods of misery indiscriminately over the dearest earthly hopes of companions, children, and friends, and paralyzes every pulse of joy, that beats in the human bosom. Many a child has been spurned from the presence of its brutal father, and been beaten for asking bread to satisfy its hunger. Intemperance stupifies man to the moral impressions of the Gospel, and hardens the heart with the touch of its benumbing powers. It is the giant of human woe, that slays his thousands and prostrates the happiness of man. This champion of human war draws his sword of vengeance against the balmy repose of public and private life, and his fatal touch withers the brightest flowers of domestic hope and joy, and mingles the poison-

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ous bowl with the bitter drugs of misery. His government is absolute monarchy, and his subjects the most contemptible slaves. When he lays upon them his cursed hand, they reel to the ground. When he strikes the stunning blow, they drop insensibly to the earth. The oppressions and scourges of the most wretched slave are enviable, in comparison with those severe wounds inflicted by this merciless tyrant, this infernal scourge, of the human race. Intemperance is a monster, that may well be personified. He frolics through the blood, preys upon the vitals, ploughs up the brain, dethrones reason, and laughs at the feeble resistance of the best constitution, and finally bears down all opposition before him. Like the devouring flame, he presses on with irresistible force, urging his deadly siege, till he consumes all that is fair and lovely in the eye of virtue. His present gifts are poverty, misery, and distress, and his capital prize a premature grave.

This champion is ravaging our beloved country, and seducing her sons of freedom to the disgraceful ranks of slavery and oppression. Intemperance is that tyrant, that has under his control many formidable evils that infest the world. His boasted labor is to hurry on thousands of victims to the commission of crime, and bring down upon them the many misfortunes that attend man in this mutable world. Intemperance in-



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volves public broils, tumults, and disturbances, and domestic discord, misery, and strife.

We trust the number among our readers is small, who are so regardless of a good name as to have abandoned themselves to the intoxicating bowl, or who have sundered all the ties of moral obligation, determined to tread the downward path of vice to a disgraceful tomb. We hope they have a higher regard to the invaluable worth of a good name; and we pray, that they may venerate its price far above the momentary glitter of silver and gold. That shall live, when wealth shall have lost its lustre; that shall flourish immortal, when gold shall have corroded to dust.

Blasphemy is another unreasonable vice, against which the public speaker or writer should raise his voice. And let no one flatter himself, because we believe in the universal and unbounded goodness of God, that a man may go on as he please. So long as a Being of infinite wisdom is enthroned in the heavens and governs the universe, so long he can never fail to measure out to every offence its adequate punishment, and has all the means at his disposal to bring it unavoidably upon the head of every transgressor. He who flatters himself that he can sin with impunity, is ignorant of the government of his God, and has never reflected upon human life in all its varied lights and shades. Do you profess to be

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a Universalist, and yet treat with irreverence the name of HIM, who made you, and whom you acknowledge to be a faithful Creator, an indulgent Father? Your professions are nothing. "He that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure." That very breath by which he inflates the lungs, can you breathe it back in blasphemies against his holy name, which angels never pronounce but with veneration and awe? Choose, O choose a good name, which can only be obtained by choosing a virtuous course of conduct. However lightly you may treat your own station in life, or however much you may disregard the dignity of your nature, yet remember the station you hold, however obscure, is stamped with responsibility. You are surrounded by a generation of youth, among whom are your own children, ready to imitate your example. Do you wish them well? Then guard your heart and life, by setting a reasonable value on a good name, and remember you cannot move without touching some string, that may vibrate long after your head rests on its cold pillow of earth.

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## SERMON XI.

### ON A GOOD NAME.

[Concluded.]

In this discourse, we shall more fully show why "a good name is rather to be chosen than great riches."

Though wealth is desirable, and in many instances conducive to human happiness, because it puts it in our power to relieve the wants and distresses of our fellow-creatures, yet it does not possess the charm to convey unbroken peace or solid joy to any bosom. The value of any thing within the range of human action, is to be estimated by its usefulness in promoting the happiness of man. That, which pours the most numerous and refined enjoyments into the soul, is to be considered of the greatest worth; and that, which has a tendency to bring upon us the most alarming miseries, misfortunes, and woes, is of course the most worthless. The one is to be fondly chosen, and pursued in proportion to its worth in administering to our enjoyments, and the other is to be avoided in proportion to its unhappy effects in multiplying our sorrows. This being an undeniable fact, the superlative value of a good name, procured by a virtuous course of

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conduct, appears, at once, to transcend all other considerations. A pure, unsullied conscience before heaven, is the most permanent bliss that a rational being can enjoy, and is of that enduring nature which no earthly power or misfortune can destroy. It supports us in the hour of adversity and trial; it comforts us in the dark hour of sorrow; it remains unmoved amidst the storms of life, and lights up the smile of satisfaction on the lips of the dying.

Nor is this all. It affords us other unruffled streams of unmingled felicity in the common intercourse of life. The approbation of the wise and the good, the confidence and esteem of our friends and associates, and the good opinion even of the vicious, are consideration of no ordinary moment. They awaken emotions in the heart of the most pleasing gratification, and open in the soul all the avenues of heaven-born felicity, imparting that peace, which this world can neither give nor take away. But as it respects *wealth*, we would remark, that though it may communicate happiness by enabling us to relieve the wants of our fellow-creatures, and afford us many joys in the indulgence of our benevolence, yet it cannot of itself communicate happiness, but virtue can. A wicked and unprincipled man is wretched, though he roll in all the wealth and splendors that earth can give. He feels in his bosom a

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*burning flame*, that all the streams of wealth can never quench, and a *craving desire*, that nothing on earth can gratify. If his "great riches" afford him any enjoyments, yet these are by no means permanent and lasting. The desolating flame may lay them in ruins, the storms on the ocean may sink them in its waves, the famine or blighting mildew may wither them forever, and leave him stripped of all his fancied joys. But nothing of this can happen to virtue. That remains forever unharmed amidst the shocks of earth. A good name is, therefore, of inconceivably more value than riches, and rather to be chosen than silver and gold.

We are formed for society. God in the beginning said, "It is not good that man should be alone." This being a fact, which all past experience, and the history of our whole race demonstrate, it is, therefore, equally true, that our dearest enjoyments flow from the social affections and from a sincere cultivation of the social intercourse of life. There is, perhaps, not a human being in existence, who would accept of all the wealth of the Indies on the condition, that he should not be respected by a single individual on earth. This circumstance shows us, in noonday light, the superior value of a good name above all the glittering appendages of wealth. Every man is beloved, and esteemed in proportion to his good-

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ness and usefulness in the world, particularly by those with whom he associates in life. If, then, to *love* and to *be beloved* depend on our conduct in the world, and if, at the same time, our happiness is derived from the exercise of reciprocal affection, we see the importance of pitching upon that course of life, which alone can secure those solid pleasures resulting from a well spent life.

Too many persons suppose they can be happy in sin; yes, even in criminal indulgence. But that transgressor was never yet found, who could point to a single wicked act in his life, the remembrance of which ever imparted one solitary gleam of joy to his heart. They may fancy there is happiness in sin; but here is the deception. It is immaterial what some may preach about *the pleasures of sin*, and *the satisfaction the transgressor often takes in a wicked course*, yet all this amounts to nothing, so long as the voice of heaven declares, "THERE IS NO PEACE, SAITH MY GOD, TO THE WICKED." Infinite wisdom *must know*, and infinite wisdom *has given* the decision, and that decision is stamped with immortality, and from it there is no appeal. If we impress the sinner with the idea that he is not punished and rewarded *here*, but that the whole is to be settled in the future world, then we, in the same proportion, *weaken* the force of virtue and *strengthen* the cause of vice. And this is one obvious

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reason, why men continue in sin, as long as they dare, expecting at some future day to repent and escape *all punishment*. They go on from day to day, and from year to year, with all the thunders of endless and immortal pain sounding in their ears, and even believing it true, yet continue to indulge in sin. Would they run such an awful risk, unless, by a certain course of education, they had been made to believe that there was happiness in transgression? No. If they believed that sin had nought to impart but misery, they would abandon it for its *own sake*; because happiness is the object of all men.

They have, therefore, by some means or other, been led to the strange infatuation, that sin possesses some secret charm to communicate that happiness to the soul, for which every bosom throbs. This fancied happiness, they vainly imagine, they can obtain by wallowing in the dark waters of iniquity, be happy *here*, then repent at last, and be happy *hereafter*. As they pass along in their wretched career, expecting every moment to grasp the fancied pleasure, yet the fond, anticipated phantom flies from their embrace and leaves them in the ruin of their joy. Though disappointed again and again, yet firmly believing that there is happiness in sin, they again push on, and thus far attribute their want of success to some miscalculation. Insensible of the nature of sin, blinded

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and self-deceived, they go on in pursuit of pleasure, while golden dreams of false felicity fire their imaginations, till at last, age places them on the verge of the grave; their object no nearer attained than it was the day they set out, while habit has fixed them in a course, that has yielded them nothing but sorrow and pain, and vanity and vexation of spirit. Stung with remorse, and pierced through with many sorrows, they breathe a repentance which the nature of their condition forces upon them, are perhaps pronounced *converted*, and they sink into the darkness of death! Their names, covered with infamy, are soon blotted from the remembrance of the living!

We observed, a moment ago, that the idea of holding up a retribution in the future world weakens the force of virtue, and strengthens the cause of vice. This has, perhaps, been abundantly shown in the arguments already offered, as being manifest in the daily conduct of men; yet we will, in a word, bring the subject plainly before you. To persuade a sinner, that he is to be punished in the *future* world for his sins in *this*, is plainly saying, that sin has many pleasures and conveniences *here*, and so far as it failed of rendering him his due desert, the balance is to be made up in another state of being. Because the balance of punishment due him *there*, is to make up the *deficiency* of punishment, which sin did

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not pay him *here*. And certainly, so far as sin did not pay him *here*, he must have been happy in its commission. And the *expectation*, that he should be happy in it *here*, was the *very cause* that induced him to continue in transgression, with the expectation of repenting and escaping punishment *hereafter*. Thus he flattered himself that he could sin with impunity, and escape its punishment in this world and the world to come.

And to satisfy a man that he is to be rewarded in the *future* world for his righteousness in *this*, is but persuading him, that virtue is attended with misery, and that so far as it failed to reward him *here*, the balance is to be made up *hereafter*. Because the balance of happiness due to him *there*, is to make up the deficiency of happiness which virtue did not pay him *here*. And so far as virtue did not pay him *here*, he must have been miserable in its practice. And the impression, that sin is productive of many enjoyments, and that righteousness is attended with misery, has a tendency to make him choose the *former* and reject the *latter*, and trust to a future repentance.

We often hear it proclaimed by those, who profess to be the guardians of the public morals, that the righteous have a hard course in warring against the corruptions of their hearts in the service of God, while the sinner goes on unconcerned and easy in the pleasures of sin. In doing

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this, they defeat the very object they are striving to obtain, which is the *conversion* of the sinner. These very impressions are one obvious reason why so many continue in sin and reject the path of righteousness and peace, which alone conducts to a good name, that is of more worth than great riches, and more durable than silver and gold.

As, then, there is no happiness in vice, as all its allurements are deceptive and vain, how important that we should shun it, and pursue that bright path of virtue and peace, which will lead to the invaluable possession of a good name. Engaging in the cultivation of all the better affections of the heart, we shall by habit so refine our natures, that "loving favor" will take entire possession of our minds, and mould them into the spotless image of heaven. *This* loving favor is rather to be chosen than silver and gold, for these will corrupt, and at last crumble into dust, while *this* shall survive the ruins of death, and flourish in those peaceful realms, where our felicity will be unbroken and perpetual.

Flatter not yourselves with the vain hope, that there is one solitary thrill of joy in the indulgence of sin. He who indulges in dissipation and vice, he who slanders his neighbour, who wrongs his fellow-men, or even utters one oath against the unsullied name of his Maker, is a most profound unbeliever in the sentiment we proclaim. He

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who possesses a hope so full of immortality as to believe, that God will finally save from sin, and bless him and all his fellow-men, will cleanse his hands and wash them in innocency. Tell me not that you are a Universalist, when the very oceans of God's goodness do not affect your heart, nor lead you to repentance. He who is satisfied that there is no happiness in sin will abandon it. He who deliberately pursues a vicious course expects to find happiness in it; and it is impossible that he believes in God's *universal grace*. It is absolutely impossible, in the very nature of things, that he can be a UNIVERSALIST. A salvation from sin is the doctrine of the Bible, and holiness itself is heaven. He who believes such a salvation to be happifying, will abandon sin, as the enemy of his peace, and seek righteousness, which alone can afford him tranquillity. Jesus says, the kingdom of heaven is righteousness and peace. If you wish to satisfy men that you *really* desire the whole human family to meet in heaven, then show your sincerity by being righteous yourself.

A sincere Universalist believes sin to be the cause of many mental woes that darken the world, and the principal cause of the greater proportion of sufferings that fall to the lot of man. He believes that a virtuous course of conduct, guided by the burning lamp of revelation, leads to those

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joys that time cannot sully, nor the hand of death extinguish. A conviction of this truth leads him to hate sin, forsake its dark dominions, and enter those fields of felicity, where the brilliant beams of virtue shed a cloudless day. Here he walks and enjoys an antepast of heaven. Its paths are the paths of peace. All its ways are pleasantness and delight. Its crystal streams are pure and sweet; its breezes healthful, and its fruits delicious. He believes God to be the Father of his creatures, that he governs the world in wisdom and mercy, that he created with a benevolent intention, and that he is not disappointed in the workmanship of his hand, but presides over just such a world as he designed it should be. He believes that this order of things, though dark to him, is designed for good, and shall terminate in the happiness of all. He believes that all rewards and punishments are instituted for some benevolent end, and that this end will be brought about in such a manner as to manifest to all the divine perfections in the clearest light, and shed unfading glory on the supreme Majesty of heaven. This faith gives him confidence in his heavenly Father, and fills his heart with gratitude and veneration. It leads him to look upon the human family as his brethren, and to do them good. He seeks their happiness, and thus chooses and merits a good name.

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At peace with all mankind, his mind irradiated with light, and enlarged with the most noble conceptions of the divine character and government, he at length lies down in peace and composure upon his dying bed, and gently breathes out, —

"Farewell, conflicting joys and fears,
Where light and shade alternate dwell;
A brighter, purer scene appears,
Farewell, inconstant world, farewell!"

He sweetly sinks to rest, and leaves behind him a good name, that can never die, and an example, for others to imitate, worth more than fortunes in gold. His memory shall survive, when the tomb on which it is insoribed shall crumble into ruin, and his example be a light to future generations.

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# SERMON XII.

## MIND NOT HIGH THINGS.

"Be of the same mind one towards another. Mind not high things, but condescend to men of low estate." ROMANS XII. 16.

THAT mysterious and incomprehensible Being, who gave us existence, has sown in our nature the seeds of mortality. By the irresistible *laws* of his empire, which he has, from the beginning, *established* for the regulating of the animal creation, we are soon to be carried to the silent grave. All, without exception, are formed out of equal clay, are subject to the same hopes and fears, joys and sorrows, while on earth, and are all destined to the slumbers of death, where we must exhibit the emblem of perfect equality. Immaterial how far one may exalt himself above another, while passing through this momentary existence, — immaterial how far he may rise above his fellow-men, in the scale of intellect and refinement, — immaterial how exalted the station he may have obtained, — how brilliant the powers of his imagination may sparkle, or how soft and sublime his eloquence may flow, — immaterial how nobly soever he may dazzle in the sunny smiles of fortune, or how secure he may repose in the fond embrace of friends, yet it is a melancholy

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truth, that he must, sooner or later, resign the whole, let go his eager grasp on all those pleasing joys, bid an everlasting farewell to those exalted splendors, and descend to the dark shades of death, where the rich and the poor, the servant and his master, the oppressor and oppressed, all lie mouldering and forgotten together.

This solemn consideration, it seems, when forcibly presented to the mind, ought to be sufficient to check the levity of man, — to soften his bosom to his fellow-beings, — to moderate his desire in pursuit of wealth and greatness, and completely to unarm him of all hostile feelings towards those with whom he associates, and with whom he is so soon to lie down in death. This, it seems, is sufficient to make us of one heart and mind in promoting each other's happiness and welfare in the world, and to make us obedient to the exhortation of the text, not to mind the high things of earth, but to condescend to men of low estate. But such is the strange infatuation of man, that he acts as though his residence on earth were eternal, and as though the whole errand of life consisted in providing for an eternity below.

We are capacitated for enjoyments of a higher and more perfect nature than we can attain to on earth. Of this we are sensible, from the fact, that there is no condition in which we can be placed here below, that is so adapted to our na-

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ture as to afford us permanent satisfaction. Uninterrupted felicity is not a plant of earth. It cannot flourish in a clime where the blighting storms of malice and envy wither all that is fair, sweet, and blooming. And though we are sensible that such is the fact, yet, deaf to all that experience, example, and observation conspire to teach, we are exerting all our powers to obtain it here below, where the united voice of earth and heaven assure us it cannot be found. We cast our eyes around us, and see the human family in every varied condition of life, from the beggar on his bed of straw, up to the king in regal splendor on the throne of nations; but in defiance of this immense distinction, they alike breathe the deep sigh of discontent. We also cast our eyes over the historic page, and scan the general fate of man in by-gone ages; but here, too, we learn the same lesson, that no *external condition* has ever added to the rational enjoyments of the soul. We see the same uneasiness, the same longing desires pervade every bosom. Our object is happiness; and amidst all the various pursuits of life, what is the reason so many fail of obtaining it? The answer is readily given. We make riches, honors, and the high things of the earth our chief pursuit and aim, and fondly imagine that our happiness lies in them. Here is our error. Man is destined to a world of mental felicity, where those external



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pursuits of fortune will be unknown; where all that he here pursues with so much eagerness will be removed from his desires forever, and where all the channels of the soul will be opened to the true fountain of felicity, and completely ravished in its flowing streams. In order, therefore, to enjoy that happiness, in this momentary state of being, which God has placed within our reach, we must make mental felicity the main pursuit of life, and the riches and conveniences of earth our secondary pursuit. We must completely reverse our conduct in order to obtain those rational enjoyments that flow from virtuous habits and dispositions. We must, as Jesus says, "Seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you."

Food and raiment are all that we can enjoy of the external comforts of life. All other enjoyments must be of a mental character. Secure first your mental joys, a pure unsullied conscience in the punctual discharge of all your social and relative duties to mankind, and be you rich or poor, you will be happy. The righteous discharge of this first great duty will not embarrass you in obtaining the comforts of life, but, on the contrary, aid you. A peaceable and honest course of conduct towards others, — a condescension to men of low estate, — a due respect for the opinions and rights of others, will endear you to all,

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and not only foster in your bosom the seeds of peace and contentment, but will conduct you in the surest path to wealth and honor. The mental powers of the soul are all that exalt our capacity for happiness above the brutal creation. And if our chief happiness lies in gold, which can only administer to our animal wants, then the brutes can vie with us in all the solid enjoyments of life. In fact, they can go beyond us. They graze the turf, and drink the unmingled stream, free from anxiety and care. While man, the lord of this lower creation, has to toil and gain the same enjoyments by the sweat of his brow.

But what a groveling thought, to bring our exalted natures and capacities for happiness down to a level with theirs! On this principle, he who is the most wealthy is the most happy. Virtue is but a name, and all the exalted principles of noble and godlike action, are but the reveries of fancy, and to practise them is but a visionary dream. No, my friends, wealth supplies our animal wants, and if virtue be wanting, it leaves our minds in wretched starvation, and our brightest joys in night! Happiness is equally attainable by the rich and the poor. It consists in a union of heart among mankind, in a union of action in the pursuit of virtue, and in the kindlier feelings of our nature. In fine, it consists in a willing obedience to the exhortations of our text: "Be of

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the same mind one towards another. Mind not high things, but condescend to men of low estate."

To each of these exhortations we will give a candid and solemn consideration. In this sermon we will attend to the exhortation; "*Be of the same mind one towards another.*" By *this*, we are not to understand, that men are to be of one heart and mind in pursuing the same occupation or profession in life, but of one mind in endeavouring to promote each other's happiness, in every condition in which they may be placed; of one mind in the practice of Christian duty, and in the exercise of charity. Selfishness produces many jarring interests among mankind, burst the bands of brotherhood asunder, and weakens the strength of that nation, society, or family among which it exists, and in proportion to the opposition it produces among its individual members. "United, we stand, divided, we fall," is a maxim full of wisdom, and is not only applicable to nations, but to communities, societies, and even to families.

A family in discord is a sight over which angels might weep, but when united in one heart and mind, it is a picture over which heaven smiles. The fond and doating father, the tender and affectionate mother, and obedient children, all united in peace and harmony, present to the mind those pleasing conceptions of the reconciled

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family immortal, that cause us to feel all the burning emotions of which the heart is susceptible. In such society as this are enjoyed the happiest moments of our existence ; moments unmingled with the bitterness of regret, unsullied by the corroding hand of time, unruffled by the perplexing cares of life, and undarkened by the tempests of indisposition. Is such a father absent, far distant on land or ocean, where duty calls? The heart of his family goes with him, and he too leaves his heart lingering behind. His companion counts the moments as they slowly roll, is faithful to his interests, makes preparation to receive him, sighs for his safe return, and welcomes him home with those emotions of ecstatic joy, which cause him to forget his past labors, toils, and dangers. Is he stretched upon a bed of pain? Unwearied she sits beside him, hushes every sound that might interrupt his broken slumbers, and watches every breath he draws. She whispers to him the soothing words of encouragement and consolation, gives neither sleep to her eyes, nor slumber to her eyelids, but is the guardian angel of his pillow.

When all human aid has failed, when the pulse beats faint, the once sparkling eye grows dim, and rolls faint and languid in its socket, she stands mute and pensive at his dying bed. Her whole soul is absorbed in the interest of the scene and

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rent with agony. She wipes the cold sweat of death from his face, gazes with exquisite anxiety till the last dreadful struggle is over, and breathes to the throne of mercy the prayer of affection for the repose of his spirit. And so feels the kind husband over his companion, indulgent parents over their dying children, and dutiful children over their parents.

But it is a lamentable circumstance, a painful consideration, that there are too many unhappy divisions in the domestic circle. Yes, it is a painful consideration, indeed, that those, who are so nearly allied to each other, should, even for one moment, indulge in feelings of acrimony. It is but a short time, at longest, that we can be together, and such unhappy divisions must render the parting scene, at the bed of death, doubly painful. Thoughtless, giddy, or oppressive as we may be to those, who are near to us in life, while blooming health is their lot, yet righteous heaven has so constituted our natures, that the most painful reminiscences will force themselves upon the mind when the injured object, to whom we have given distress, is upon a dying bed. Every unkind word, every harsh treatment, the whole dark picture of our ungenerous conduct, will present itself to the imagination, in all its naked woes. And be that dying one a parent, a companion, a child, their very silence, as they turn upon us a

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languid eye fading in death, will harrow up every painful recollection. O! if we wish to tread upon their graves with an unsullied conscience before heaven, let us be of one mind, live in peace, and discharge to them those sacred duties of kindness and affection, which the ties that bind them to us enjoin.

This world is too much made up of appearances. Many a family, which we suppose to be the abode of union, peace, and joy, is distracted with the voice of discord, and is dragging out an existence in secret, concealed grief. Many a husband and wife, who, we suppose, are of one heart and mind and passing their days in the sunshine of peace and love, are torn by secret broils, and whose mansion stands overcast with the dark shadows of discontent and misery. Little do we dream of the secret woes, that rend many a worthy heart concealed behind a smiling countenance. The husband is perhaps stern and unrelenting, and will, in no case, yield to the wishes of his companion. Discouragement and anger may perhaps at times take possession of the heart. In such a case, instead of treating her kindly, he rouses into a passion himself, and a private contention ensues. This is a wretched practice, for instead of extinguishing the flame, it adds fuel to the fire, and consumes all that is fair and lovely in matrimonial and domestic life. Much misery

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might be avoided by observing the following rule. When the one is melancholy, let the other be rationally cheerful, and endeavour to divert the attention from the subject that causes gloom. When the one is angry, let the other keep a perfect equanimity and a benign composure of countenance. Then watch the opportunity, and in some future day, when the offended one is most cheerful and kind, then bring forward the subject, and expostulate most feelingly on the impropriety of indulging a wrathful spirit to a bosom friend. Speak of the shortness of life, and point each other to the silent grave and to the parting scene, and vengeance, anger, and discontent will soon be strangers in your habitation. Your dear children, from the very dawnings of intellect, will take the example, grow up in harmony and affection, with perfect rule over their spirit, and thus you will not only secure your own domestic peace, but will bequeath those sacred enjoyments to your posterity; enjoyments that infinitely outweigh a thousand fortunes in gold! Let others toil to leave their offspring wealth, be ours the joy to bequeath them this. We ask no more.

We are not only to be of the same mind one towards another in our families, but in our religious societies. Here all selfishness ought to be discarded, all private interests sacrificed, all hostile feelings subdued, and the whole offered on the

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altar of general good, and thus the harmony, peace, and prosperity of the whole body consulted. The permanent security of these depend on the individual conduct of the members. By uniting ourselves in a religious body, we express the necessity of living a sober life, maintaining a union of heart, and a respectful conversation towards all with whom we associate in life. Let us not dream, that heaven will prosper us above others, if we also blaspheme the name of Him, who gave us life and sustains us in being. Let us lay aside every evil, that has a tendency to disunion, and live soberly and righteously in the world, doing good unto all as we have opportunity.

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## SERMON XIII.

### MIND NOT HIGH THINGS.

[Continued.]

HAVING from the commencement of these sermons confined myself to prescribed limits, I had no room in my last to pursue the first division of my subject so far as I intended. I will therefore here resume it.

"*Be of the same mind, one towards another.*" We have thus far confined our attention to family union, and have just glanced at the necessity of union in religious societies. This is a day of inquiry and light, when the most keen and searching glances are sent into every creed. Many denominations, that have walked together heart and hand for many years, each repelling the assaults of those, who attempted to extinguish their *ism*, have at length been separated by internal divisions, and formed two opposing parties, even though they once believed the *same creed*, and advocated the *same church government*. The present is a trying period, and it stands us in hand to endeavour to "keep the unity of the spirit in the bonds of peace." Let us not dream of religious union and prosperity, unless we allow each one to think for himself in matters of Scripture

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interpretation. Nor let us dream of prosperity, if there is among us more theory than practice. It is true, Universalists are as moral as any other denomination; but this is not enough. They ought, in *kindness* and *benevolence*, to transcend other denominations as far as their doctrine of universal benignity transcends the doctrine of unending woe.

Neither are we to dream of religious union and prosperity, unless we raise our united voices against those, who revel over the flowing cup of intoxication, which pours so many streams of misery and disunion on the world. Let no one fancy to himself, that the drunkard's toast, "*here is health and success to us!*" has any charm to avert his ruin, or to stay the judgment of heaven. The more frequently that toast has been uttered, while smiling upon the cup of inebriation held in a trembling hand, the further have health and success been removed from the deluded victim, and the more swift and deadly have misfortune, sickness, distress, and pain fallen upon him. Intemperance is a demon, that sows the seeds of discord among all ranks, orders, and conditions of men. Beneath his crushing hand creation reels, and fortunes fall in broken ruins! and peace, the sweet angel of mercy, flies these turbulent skies, and lights on realms unmoved by the hand of commotion and discord. At his approach, blooming

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health is driven back from its warm abode, and the fairest flowers of domestic love, hope, and joy are withered forever! Let this frightful foe of discord and confusion be barred from our sacred heritage, and peace be within our borders.

We are not only to be of one heart and one mind in resisting profanity and intemperance, but in resisting tale-bearing. Let us not speak evil of others. This is beneath the character of a gentleman, and certainly beneath that of a Christian; consequently, no gentleman or Christian will indulge in it. It is the employment of *low, ill-bred minds*, and therefore none will engage in it, but those who are destitute of reputation themselves. This vice has no excuse, and must therefore originate in the *basest* motives. They intend to bring their fellow-creatures down to a level with themselves, and thus lessen them in the good opinion of others, and destroy their peace. And though they may effect their object, so far as the good opinion of the virtuous is calculated to give us happiness, yet the approbation of a good conscience, arising from the conviction of innocency, can never be rooted out from the heart of its possessor by all the calumnies of earth. *This* God has secured in the secret chambers of the soul, and forever barred it against the breath of slander. There he takes up his abode and holds communion with the contrite spirit.

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The real merits and consolations of virtue, are secured to the possessor by the impartial legislation of righteous heaven. Intemperance in its effects, compared with slandering, is harmless; at least so far as producing discord is concerned. The peaceable drunkard, compared even with that church member, who is continually sowing discord in society, is an angel. Slander is but the infectious breath of a foul spirit, that poisons the healthful atmosphere wherever it is breathed, and breaks the quiet repose, the calm serenity, of neighbourhoods and families, as it were, with an electric shock.

Political slander is as infectious and destructive to the harmony of the nation, and the security of our government, as private slander is to neighbourhoods and societies. No sooner is a candidate held up for office, than all the party dogs of war on both sides are let loose and set to barking. Immaterial how fair may be his character, how inviolable his veracity, or how unsullied his honor and integrity, they will make him appear to be an outcast from society, covered with the darkest blots of infamy. Immaterial how great may be his qualifications, or how splendid his talents, they will, by that species of logic for which slanderers are famous, prove him to be a fool. These dissentions do not expire when the candidates are elected. They are carried to the

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capitol of our common country, and blown out in more than wordy war. There, we have reason to fear, the volcano is gathering, and that the day is not distant when it will disembogue in more than the thunders of Etna, wrap our political heavens in a blaze, and melt its elements with fervent heat. Anarchy and confusion will seize the reins of government, and drive us to the oblivious shades of departed empires. If we continue to go on in our political slanders, as a nation, losing sight of our common welfare, and sacrificing the *general*, on the altar of *partial* interest, the day of our ruin is not remote. Its awful morn has already dawned, it seems, dawned with streaks of malignant light, like ill-fated Troy, ominous of the purple streams, the crimson blood, that watered the Trojan plains where mighty Sarpedon fell, where Hector lay slain by the sword of Achilles. Heaven forbid, that our national sun, that rose so fair, should go down in blood, and shroud our temple of Liberty in everlasting night! To avert such a catastrophe let us reform, and do our duty as individuals. The safety of any body politic depends on the conduct of the individuals who compose it. And God grant, that these dissentions may cease, that political peace and harmony may become perfect, and our government may stand immovable on its basis, like the rock, that remains unshaken by the furious storms that agi-

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tate the ocean. May we, as a nation, be of one mind in resisting every species of immorality, in studying the happiness of our fellow-creatures; of one mind in obtaining a knowledge of the character of our Creator, in studying his parental and benign government, and his divine attributes and unchanging perfections; and be of one mind in acquainting ourselves with his beautiful works, which swarm around us and afford us so many rational delights. Let us store our minds with useful knowledge, practise the precepts of Christ, labor for mental emancipation, and contentment and peace will be our lot.

In the great duties of religious obligation, let us be of one heart and mind. Let us live like brethren, not only among ourselves, but among other denominations. It is not long, that we are to be together. We are fading like the flower of the field, and ought to bear in mind, that death will soon lay our heads equally low in the dust, and the worms shall cover us. We glitter for a moment like the bubbles borne on the bosom of the ocean; they break and mingle again with the parent fountain. We toil and heap up wealth, pass like empty shadows over the plain, and vanish forever! Generations that covered the earth are gone, and unremembered by the living. They strove to gather wealth and honors, they met each other in the hostile field; rolled garments in

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blood, bedewed the widow's and the orphan's cheek with tears, and filled their peaceful habitations with the voice of lamentation and woe. Thousands lived in clamors and discord, and one seemed destined to be oppressed by another. But the fields of war are still, the noise of battle is hushed, and the voice of lamentation and woe is heard no more! Hark! All is still as the chambers of eternal silence! Where are they? In the shades of death! Kind reader, this is the doom of us all! And so it will soon be said of you and me! Let us then be of one mind. Let us live like brethren. Let us not lay the cursed hand of oppression upon one another. Let us do good by visiting the fatherless in their affliction and keeping ourselves unspotted from the world.

We have now considered the fact, that real felicity consists in mental pleasures and gratifications, and that these alone exalt our nature and capacity for happiness above the brute creation, and have directed your attention to virtue and peace, as the only condition in which that happiness can be found. We have brought to view the propriety of being of one heart and mind towards each other in our families, in our religious societies, in the community, and in our national concerns. We have set before you the evils resulting from intemperance, and from private and political slander.

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We will now, in the *second* place, take into consideration the *negative* and *affirmative* consequence resulting from them on the morals of the community, so far as the causes leading to *intemperance* and *crime* are concerned.

Many discourses have been delivered, during the three past years, on intemperance, pointing out its ruinous effects on the morals of society, while but few discourses have been put into the hands of the public pointing out the causes leading to this destructive vice, and those few have not in my humble opinion traced it to its *true source*. Much has also been said about intemperance leading to crime, which in many respects is true. But all this is not coming to the fountain head, from whence these turbid streams flow. We will take the liberty to differ on this subject with all that has as yet fallen upon our ear, and independently give our opinion, as to what we conceive to be the *original cause* from whence these baneful effects spring. We will endeavour to show, that *the poorer class of society are driven to intemperance and crime by the conduct of the rich; (those whom the fashion of the world calls respectable and great;) yes, by the conduct of too many, who are even attempting to reform them.*

First, then, we would remark; that man is a creature of want, which is the first cause of all action. Had he no wants, he would never seek



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to supply them, either by *honorable* or *dishonorable* means. To this self-evident proposition, all will, without hesitation, assent. We will now attend to our general character as a nation, for it will be admitted on all hands, that actions speak louder than words. As a nation, we enjoy much liberty; but public opinion, either of a political or religious character, may become so popular as to erect itself into an engine of oppression, and so formidable, that many an honest man dare not dissent, nor independently raise his voice in defence of what he believes to be truth, but will tamely submit himself a slave to the opinions and doctrines of others. This is probably the case with the greater proportion of the American people.

Again, though we profess to value every man by his integrity or moral worth, yet it is a fact, that in conduct we make a man's reputation depend principally on his purse. I yield the point without controversy, that in books, in newspapers, in preaching, and in words, we profess to esteem a man, and rate his standing in society, by his integrity. But what do words and books, and newspapers, and preaching amount to, while mankind in conduct practise right the contrary of all these ostentatious professions? They amount to nothing but hypocrisy, or ridiculous nonsense. Does a man's standing, in these days, depend on his conduct? By no means. Let us introduce an example. Suppose there were two individuals of

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equal talents, and both possessed an equal education. Their moral characters are the same. But one of them falls in possession of an immense fortune, while the other is poor indeed. Now will public conduct place them on an equality? No. Will they both move in the same social circle? No. Will they both be treated with the same politeness and attention by their neighbours? No. Should they propose a public measure for the good of the town, would the one be listened to with the same attention as the other? No. Would he possess so much influence in society? No. Well, what can be assigned as the reason, why this rich man stands so far above the other in the public opinion? Ans. It is because his character is measured by the length of his purse, and the weight of his influence is determined by the weight of his gold.

It is not a thing of rare occurrence, that the rich are thus distinguished from the poor, but it is a fact so notorious that it has long since passed into a proverb. This being the course of conduct which men practise, the impression has therefore become general that reputation, influence, and power depend on wealth. Hence the great inquiry, uppermost in every mind, is, "How shall I get rich, so that I may stand high in the estimation of men, and exert a powerful influence in society, and be numbered among those who move in the higher circles of life?"

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## SERMON XIV.

### MIND NOT HIGH THINGS.

[Concluded.]

EVEN a man, who is in many things unprincipled, if he is at the same time wealthy, takes a station in the higher circles of life, where the poor, but honest man, would not be admitted. This course of conduct is not only practised by what are called men of the world, but by professors of religion of about all denominations, by both preachers and people.

The middling, and the poor class, seeing no encouragement, or even possibility, of rising so as to associate with those, who move in the higher circles of life, by any virtuous course of conduct they may pursue, and sensible that wealth alone possesses the charm to give them virtue and notice in the world, they are thus driven to various dishonorable means to obtain it. Multitudes are driven to the crimes of counterfeiting, theft, and even robbery and piracy. They commence their wretched course, with the intention to abandon it, as soon as a competent fortune is obtained. Other thousands are driven to gambling; and even those, who are called respectable, take every possible advantage in trade and bargaining. Their

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pursuits are various, but their object is one and the same, namely, to gain wealth, so that they may obtain a high standing and influence in society. Thousands, thus driven into crime, are detected, lose their reputation, and abandon themselves to intemperance. Their evil example has a pernicious influence on the morals of those children and youth, who may, by various circumstances, be placed in their society, and thus the pestilence, in all its frightful horrors, gathers force and spreads.

There are thousands of virtuous persons, whom poverty excludes from the higher ranks of life, who are doomed to seek the converse of those, who are in a measure corrupted, and, by associating with them, are at length involved in habits of dissipation and obscenity. Man is a social being, loves society, and, rather than spend his life in solitude, will seek the converse of the vicious.

If we would obey the injunction of the text, — "Mind not high things, but condescend to men of low estate," these evils would be in a great measure removed. If we, as a community, would strip away the fancied reputation, which wealth attaches to the human character, and, independent of property, place every man on an equal footing, according to their moral and mental worth, and let their power and influence in society be according

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to their conduct, it would give a noble tone to public feeling and moral grandeur.

By the "*high things*," mentioned in our text, we are to understand that vain popularity which one man wishes to enjoy above another, in a religious or political sense. It is one of the ruling passions of the day in which we live, to be considered of high standing among our fellow-creatures, and to possess a larger share of influence over the minds and opinions of men, than those whom we consider our rivals. Those, who possess this desire, and at the same time feel a haughty spirit towards those, whom they consider in the humble walks of life, are certainly not the men who are entitled to our esteem, nor are they to be looked up to as examples of magnanimity. So far from possessing true greatness of soul, or being entitled to veneration, they are certainly below those whom they affect to despise. A truly great and good man, has no desire to dazzle but to be useful in the world. He sees the miseries under which thousands groan, and desires to relieve them, but with no wish to be considered great for discharging those duties of kindness and humanity. But it is a lamentable consideration, that too many, in performing those acts of mercy, seek to stand on an eminence above the crowd they wish to benefit, and proclaim their intentions to men through the loud-sounding trumpet of fame,

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but, at the same time, will not even stoop to converse with the very beings they profess such a warm desire to aid. Every thing must be done on a high scale, and in the manner they dictate, otherwise they have no wish it should be done at all. It is a matter of regret, that this spirit, so desirous of minding high things, has been carried into the sanctuary, — in fact, has been carried to the solemn gates of death, — yes, even into eternity.

We have witnessed what are commonly called "revivals of religion," in which two or more denominations united, apparently, heart and hand. They publicly declared, that, as they saw their fellow-creatures exposed to the burning wrath of God in the future world, they had no motive in view but their conversion and escape from that awful doom; — that it was to them a matter of indifference with what church they united themselves, provided they would only repent and turn to God. All this passed on well till the reformation ceased. The next thing to be determined was, what doctrine do you believe, and what church will you join? This was a trying point, and its settlement filled them with animosity towards each other. And why? Because each desired the honor of converting them to their faith, and of bringing them into their church, or else, that they should not be converted at all.

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Though this has been done by some, yet it is no evidence that all will do this, or even approve it. There are those, who, we believe, are actuated by nobler motives in the cause of truth, and who are not aspiring to stand high, nor striving "who shall be greatest." One denomination has labored to assume the entire honor of reforming the public morals, — has labored to become incorporated by an act of legislature into an American Temperance Society, and were unwilling to admit Universalists and Unitarians to coöperate with them in this work of reform. This is but aspiring after high things, instead of manifesting the meek and lowly spirit of Christ.

But we would more particularly remark, that it is this very course of conduct of any man, or class of men, exalting themselves above others on account of their *wealth* or *external circumstances*, that discourages the poor, who are not only called but treated as the lower order of society, and drives thousands of them to the intoxicating cup, as a relief from the mortifications of poverty, and drives other thousands into crime, as the only means to obtain that wealth by the omnipotence of which, they alone can rise to eminence, respectability, and influence among men. Preachers of the Gospel, as well as others, give sanction by their conduct to these false notions of respectability and greatness. They

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will seek the society, and court the favor, of the rich in preference to the poor, even though the *latter* may exceed the *former* in integrity and moral worth. This, we say, is the most powerful incentive to drive men into a state of discouragement, intemperance, and crime. It is a fearful precipice on which we stand, as a religious community. Instead of estimating a man's standing by his virtuous principles, it is too much estimated by his dollars.

So did not Jesus Christ, our great example. He mingled with the lowest class of society. He associated with and visited most among those he wished to reform, so that his meek, mild, and heavenly example might exert a salutary influence upon their hearts, and cast a restraint upon their conduct. He was a friend to publicans and sinners, and ate and drank with them. He went among them, as a physician, to give them life and health, and to conduct them by encouragement and persuasion to the paths of righteousness and peace. His presence was not needed among those who were whole. He was of course seldom found in their society. He did not desire to rank with the rich, self-righteous pharisee. So ought those, who profess to be the servants of Christ, to go among them who are most in need of their aid. "The servant is not above his Master." They ought, therefore, to condescend

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to men of low estate, and visit the abodes of poverty and want.

But instead of this, they stand aloof, even from the respectable, because they are poor; and instead of visiting those, who indulge in dissipation and vice, and trying to lead them to the paths of virtue and peace, are heaping upon them the most opprobrious epithets. By esteeming the rich and associating with them, they practise a course of conduct, which has rooted the impression deep in every mind, that to be esteemed, and to rank with them in the social circle, they must be rich. This has driven many a virtuous man into crime, many into bad company, and finally into discouragement and intoxication. This no one can deny. What, we ask, is the reason, that there is so large a proportion of the middle and lower class of society, compared with the rich, who indulge in *crimes* and *intemperance*? Why is it, when misfortune falls upon the rich, that they, so often, resort to the intoxicating draught? The mystery can only be unriddled in the stubborn fact, that wealth, more than virtue, gives a man a reputation in the world, and this destructive vice involves thousands in ruin.

If every man were assured that, be he *rich* or *poor*, he could associate with those who are wealthy and respected, and move in the higher ranks of life, if he only maintained his integrity,

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and that he would be esteemed in proportion to his moral virtues and mental acquirements, every man would be induced to merit a good name; and their good opinion would operate as a constant check upon his conduct. Every man, by early attention to his deportment, can become respectable, but every man cannot become wealthy.

Did the rich esteem the poor, and admit them into their social circle *solely* on the ground of moral worth, there would be but little danger of these poor ever forfeiting their standing, by plunging into the floods of intemperance and crime. And did they reject from their circle the *rich* who were vicious until reformed; in fine, did they only strip away from wealth its fancied charm, to make them either respectable, or influential, did they confine it to its due limits, as being only necessary to satisfy our animal wants, and did they with one consent declare, that an improved mind and virtuous worth should be the only criterion, by which men should take their stations in social life, intemperance and crime would soon cease. Men would then be as much engaged in striving to merit a fair reputation, as they now are in striving to obtain wealth. It is, therefore, the conduct of the great, by falsely attaching character and influence to wealth, that is driving their fellow-creatures into crimes to obtain it, and other thousands into discouragement and intemperance.

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From this charge preachers are not exempt. They too respect and visit the rich more than the poor, and thus indirectly lend their influence to drive them from a virtuous life, to a course of dissipation and crime. And when once they get them there, then they wish to devise some *great means* to bring them back to the paths of sobriety and virtue. Do they endeavour to effect this, by ceasing to mind high things, and by condescending to men of low estate? No, but instead of going among them, and taking this unhappy class of our fellow-creatures by the hand, and leading them by encouragement and persuasion to the paths of temperance and reformation, they have in substance, said, "Stand by thyself, I am holier than thou." They have minded high things, by placing themselves on an elevation above them, and made them out to be worse than murderers, thieves, and robbers, by ascribing all the crimes that are committed to the use of rum! This has discouraged and exasperated many, and made them feel, that reformation would be of no avail to raise them to be the associates of those, who appeared so anxious to reform them. Their language has in substance been, you must reform, giving us the credit, but must stand where you are in the lower circles of life, obey our exhortations, and look up to us as your benefactors, but you cannot expect to rank with us, because you have

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*no cash* to introduce yourselves into our circles. And as all men desire society, they have remained with their companions in iniquity.

For any class of society to take a station above others, and endeavour to force men to abandon the cup by passing votes, or enacting by-laws that no spirits shall be sold them, is but exciting their rage, and causing the intemperate to drink the more out of revenge, and causing those that are already temperate to increase the quantity as an act of defiance. It is a fearful precipice on which we stand as a religious community. Estimating a man's standing in society by his immense wealth, or learned profession, rather than by his integrity and virtue, is attended with the most dangerous circumstances, as we have already noticed. Men cannot be reformed by force, nor by declaiming what a low, mean, unworthy, degraded part of the human race they are.

There is too much pride in our world. We ought to bear in mind, that death will soon lay our heads equally low in the dust, and "the worms shall cover us!" O the folly of human pretensions to greatness! Let us not mind high things, but condescend to men of low estate. By preachers and people of all denominations obeying the exhortation of our text, mankind would in a great measure be restrained from crime, and certainly from being openly intemperate. If, then,

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we sincerely desire to reform them, and to hold a powerful check upon their conduct, and prove ourselves the benefactors of our race, let us begin the work by adhering most scrupulously to our text, which exhorts us to be of the same mind one towards another, to mind not high things, but to condescend to men of low estate.

It is the duty of preachers, in particular, to be meek and lowly in spirit; to be humble, and watch over the moral maladies of mankind; to break down the arrogant distinctions, which the fashions and riches of the world have set up; to esteem men purely for their moral and intellectual worth, independent of the gifts of fortune, and to visit those who are given to intemperance, and, by gentle, persuasive measures, endeavour to lead them to habits of sobriety. And when this is effected, treat them according to that respect which their virtues merit. God is kind to the evil and to the unthankful, and ought we to be unkind to them? Heaven forbid.

We have now set before you what we conceive to be the *principal cause* leading to *intemperance*, *dishonesty*, and *crime*. True, there may be some exceptions to this, but we are conscious, that it is the conduct of those very men, who are declaiming against *intemperance* and *crime*, that first drives their fellow-creatures into those deplorable haunts of vice. They do

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this *indirectly*, and perhaps *innocently*. They do it by giving too much reputation and influence to the wealthy class of the community, by paying too much homage and respect to gold, and by withholding from the virtuous poor, that respect which their conduct merits. We cannot set this truth before you in a more forcible light, than by relating from memory, an anecdote of Dr. Franklin, with which we will conclude. The rich merchants and professional men in Philadelphia proposed to form themselves into a social circle from which all *mechanics* were to be excluded. The paper, drawn up for the purpose, was presented to Dr. Franklin for his signature. On examining its contents, he remarked, that he could not consent to unite his name, inasmuch as, by excluding mechanics from their circle, they had excluded God Almighty, who was the greatest mechanic in the universe!

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## SERMON XV.

### ON FORGIVENESS.

"And be ye kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you."—EPHESIANS IV. 32.

A TENDER heart is the boon of kind heaven, and forgiveness is a virtue too little exercised in the common intercourse of life. Men are too apt to be in character Pharisees. They are too apt to love those that love them, and to hate their enemies. Retaliation is inconsistent with the spirit of the Gospel, and is a vice deeply to be stigmatized and deprecated by all lovers of peace and morality. By retaliation, we are to understand the injuring of another because he has injured us. This spirit of revenge betrays a contracted mind, in which the feelings of compassion and forbearance never found a permanent abode. A man of a peevish, irritable, and revengeful temperament, is to be pitied, instead of being injured in return. By retaliating the evil he may have done, you involve yourself in the same condition of meanness, and in your turn become the injurer.

All those men, whose names are rendered illustrious and immortal, have been distinguished

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for a spirit of forbearance, kindness, and mercy. Were there no examples of rashness, no failings and imperfections among men, there would then be no opportunity to distinguish ourselves by a spirit of forgiveness. God has so constituted the present existence of his creatures, that the perfections of his divine character might be manifested to them in the unchanging exercise of his paternal compassion and forgiveness; and thus afford them an opportunity to imitate himself in the exercise of those exalted feelings, which emanate from heaven.

We are not, however, to understand, that tenderness of heart and forgiveness are to be exercised to the utter exclusion of the principles of honor and justice. If our children offend, or our dearest earthly friend do wrong, we are to manifest the feelings of tenderness and forgiveness, but these ought not to induce us to overlook their crimes or faults, by remaining silent in regard to their vices. This would be suffering our compassion to degenerate into weakness. It would in fact be hardness of heart. It would betray a spirit of indifference to their dearest interest, as by our silence, they might remain in blindness to the demerit of their deeds, and hurry on to the ruin of their reputation, and consequently, of their earthly happiness. True tenderness of heart makes us watchful over the conduct of



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those we love, and with whom we are connected in life; moves us to lay naked before them their faults, so that they may early correct them, and thus inspire their hearts with tenderness, and prompt them to regard the happiness, feelings, and welfare of others. It is immaterial how near and dear your friend may be, you should, by the feelings of mercy, be induced to tell him his faults, however much it may wound his heart. The wise man says, "the wounds of a friend are faithful; but the kisses of an enemy are deceitful." Too many parents, for want of determination of character, and for suffering their compassion to degenerate into weakness and remaining blind to the faults of their children, have seen them come to some disgraceful end, — a state prison, or even a gallows. This, instead of being true tenderness of heart, was infatuation, and the worst species of hardness and insensibility to the welfare of their offspring. On the other hand, we ought never to suffer a spirit of revengeful indignation to slumber in our bosoms, ready, on every trivial occasion, to awaken into resentment and retaliation. In fine, we ought to imitate our God in feelings and conduct towards each other, as it is expressed in our text. But many suppose, that God is filled with feelings of revengeful indignation towards his creatures, and that the period is rolling on, when he will cease to be merciful, and

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will commence torturing us in the future world for the sins committed in this, and that too, when punishment can do no good to the sufferer, when reformation will be out of his reach. To torment a frail, dependent creature, under such circumstances, would be the most degrading species of revenge. And if this is the conduct of God, then we must practise the same, because we are commanded to imitate him. Our text says, "Be ye kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another; *even as God* for Christ's sake hath forgiven you."

In this passage, our Father in heaven is held up to the world as that model of *kindness*, *tenderness*, and *forgiveness*, which mortals are to imitate. God is the moral standard to which every bosom ought to aspire. The highest perfection and loveliness of man, fall infinitely short of the intrinsic loveliness and divine perfections of Jehovah.

If he is that standard of moral excellence which we are to imitate, then we must admit, that the copy far exceeds the imitation. If man is called upon to act like God, in order to improve his character and affections, then God is better than man, and every opposing objection must forever fall to the ground. Perhaps it may be said, that all denominations of men allow him to be so. This is not correct. It is true, they *say this*, in so many words. But words are *one*

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thing, and what a doctrine involves is quite *another*. I might believe, and most rigidly maintain, that an earthly father had prepared a palace of comfort for his five *obedient* children, and a furnace of fire to torture his five *disobedient* children; and suppose he had dealt with his ten children as above designed; with what propriety could I step before the public, and contend, that he was the best man in America? Even were I persuaded, in my own mind, and firmly believed him to be the best man in existence, would either my *belief* or *acknowledgment* make it a fact? No; every man of common sense and common humanity would think me deranged. My saying that he was good, and even believing him so, could not alter the awful reality, but would be an evidence of my want of consistency and propriety. He would still be a bad, unfeeling man, and in no comparative sense so good as that father, who should punish his children in mercy, and for their future amendment and benefit.

But what is all this compared with that character, which thousands ascribe to the God who rules above? It is no more than a drop to the unmeasured ocean; because those five children would soon cease to suffer; but God, they contend, will torture without mercy or end, millions on millions of his poor dependent creatures for the sins of a short life! The most abandoned

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and unrelenting savage, who roams the American forest, — the worst wretch in human form would not do this, but release, at length, the sufferer from pain. And those, who contend that God will not release, but, on the contrary, involve the victim of his ire deeper in woe, attribute to him a character infinitely worse, than that of the most cruel and degraded of our race, and no argument, to the contrary, can be, for one moment, maintained. If a man desire the holiness and happiness of all his fellow-creatures, and would bring them to a glorified state of beatitude in heaven, had he the power, and still contends, that God will not, it is elevating his goodness far above the goodness of God. And for any man to come forward with this acknowledgment on his lips, and yet address the benignant Parent of all, and, in prayer, acknowledge him to be the best of all beings, is only using words without propriety or meaning. There is no sense, no reason, in such logic. It completely contradicts itself, and what is contradictory cannot be true.

Would you save all men from sin and its attendant misery, if you could? O, yes, is the answer; I would, and carry them all in the arms of unbounded benevolence to glory. Well, has God the power to do it? Yes, is the reply. But do you believe that he will exert his power so as to accomplish it? No, says the objector;

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I believe, that he will sentence a large portion of his erring offspring to endless and inconceivable woe. Very well; then you are the better being of the two. And it is a melancholy circumstance to those unfortunate creatures, that you are not on the throne of the universe. If this be so, then our text ought to be reversed. God ought to copy your tenderness, and forgive men as you do! We are certainly called upon to conform our conduct to the best standard, and to imitate the *best* being. If you are the *best*, then God and man ought to be called upon, and *entreated* to imitate you! No, says the objector; God is superlatively the best being in the universe. You may talk, and tell me so, till the morning sun sinks beyond the western hills, and yet your *creed* will contradict every word you utter. What you have just acknowledged, unchangeably stares you in the face. You say, that you would forgive all, save them from sin, and raise them to a blessed eternity, if you had the power. This power, you say, God possesses, and yet you *believe*, and *contend*, that he will not do it. It is certainly an unfortunate circumstance to the human family, if their Father in heaven is destitute of that goodness which you feel! From whom did you receive all those compassionate feelings of heart? Why, says the objector, God gave them to me. But how can God give you what he has not him-

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self? If you possess more benevolence than God, you could not have received it from him; because, on this principle, he did not have it in possession to give. Surely, he could not communicate to you, or any other being, what he did not originally possess. From what source, then, did you derive so much tenderness and love? There must, certainly, be some being in the universe in whose bosom are rooted as much benevolence and love as you feel, or how could it have been communicated to you from another? Now, where did you get it? God gave it to me, says the objector. This cannot be, because your doctrine proves, that you have more love than the God who made you! If you insist, that he has given it to you, has he not, in such case, given you more than he originally possessed? He has. If so, endless misery may be true; for on this principle he has none left!

The Scriptures teach, that "God is love"; and all his works speak the same language, saying, "The Lord is good, and his mercies endure forever." But how good is he? The doctrine of endless wrath says, he is not as good as you. You are but a small stream from an infinite ocean of love; and yet this little stream is greater than the ocean from which it issues, and rises far above its fountain head! Can this be true? Impossible. O, do you not perceive how your own feel-

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ings, which you daily experience, contradict your creed! You feel, desire, and pray for the salvation of all men, and if you had the power, all your feelings, prayers, and desires would be carried into execution. And yet your doctrine denies, that God, the fountain in which all your affections originate and live, will do it; and, at the same time you say, that you have no love only what he gave you! What inconsistencies, contradictions, and blindness are here! Man, a small drop from the benevolent fountain God, is willing to do what the source from whence he came is unwilling to do! Then a drop of love, in the human bosom, is more tender and benevolent, than an ocean in that God who placed it there!

We all know, that the fountain must be more extensive than the stream it sends forth,—yea, larger than all its running streams put together. This we know to be correct, as well as we know that the sun enlightens the world. Let us then collect these little streams into one. Bring, if you please, into one body, the love and benevolence of men and angels, of cherubim and seraphim;—stretch your thoughts to unnumbered worlds, extract the love from countless bosoms, and condense the whole into one being. How great, lovely, and adorable, would that creature be! Then, let the question be put to him, From

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whence did you derive all those noble qualities of love, mercy, and goodness? He replies, *from my Father, God!* Now, we must grant, that God far exceeds him in goodness, because this noble creature is but an emanation from him; and the good desires of this creature would be equal to the good desires of the countless millions of men and angels in all worlds; and could have no other intentions only those which goodness and mercy dictate, and goodness itself can do nothing contrary to its own nature, any more than ice can burn, or fire freeze. This creature would desire the happiness of all; and yet *even he* is but a small rivulet flowing from the crystal FOUNTAIN of life and being! This creature would institute a government *perfectly merciful;* and mercy would, of course, require, that the *disobedient* should be punished to bring them to *obedience*, and perfect them in the same state of glorification and love with that being itself.

"God is *love*," and it therefore follows, that he is *love* to every creature he has made, and it is utterly impossible that he can do any thing contrary to his own nature. "He cannot deny himself." He will, therefore, do all that love dictates. It is consistent with parental love to punish for the good of its offspring, but not to punish unmercifully. But, inquires the objector, does God punish for the good of his creatures? We

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will let Paul settle this question; Heb. xii. 6–11. "For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth..... But if ye be without chastisement, whereof *all* are partakers, then are ye bastards and not sons. Furthermore, we have had fathers of our flesh, which corrected us, and we gave them reverence; shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits, and live? For they verily for a few days chastened us after their own pleasure; but he for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness. Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous; nevertheless, afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby." Now show us, if you can, any punishment which God inflicts, that contradicts his paternal goodness. It cannot be done. He has threatened and inflicted *everlasting punishment* upon nations, as such, but not a solitary passage can be produced from Genesis to Revelations, where he has threatened any *individual* with *everlasting* punishment.

God is the adorable Fountain of all tenderness, love, and compassion, and no mother's soul was imbued in the fount of mercy like his, who was "the brightness of his glory and the express image of his perfections." True, her yearnings over the babe of her bosom are great; still they

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bear but little comparison to the love of him who breathed those feelings there. God compares himself to the mother. "Can a woman forget her sucking child?" Woman, being of a more delicate formation than man, possesses a mind susceptible of more fine, deep, and lasting impressions than his. The affections of her soul, when fully roused into action, and fixed upon their object, are deeper than those of man, extend far beyond the compass line of his, and range those sequestered haunts, those delightful fields of mental felicity, where his finest affections never penetrated. Let her heart once become fixed upon its darling object, and it is immaterial in what situation in life we contemplate her, — whether prosperous or adverse, we behold the same unshaken constancy, the same bright and burning flame. Her love to her children is pure as the dew drops of the morning, high as the heavens, and unchanging as the sun. It scorns dictation, bids defiance to oppression, and never for one moment loses sight of its object. No disappointments that cross her path, no scenes of adverse fortune that darken her sky, can wrench it from her grasp, obscure it from her vision, or tear asunder the silken cord, that binds it to her heart.

The truth of these remarks we see verified in that unwearied watchfulness and care, which she

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exercises over her children, in supplying their countless and ever varied little wants; in allaying their little griefs, in soothing their tender hearts by the soft whispers of encouragement and love, in hushing them to repose, and in watching over the slumbers of their pillow. Are her children exposed to danger, and full in her view? Then no devouring flame, that wraps her dwelling in destruction, no rolling surges, that lash the foaming main, can, in such a moment of peril, overawe her spirit, or deter her from rushing into the very jaws of death to save them. Are they sick? Sleepless she sits beside their bed, and watches every breath they draw. Are they racked with pain? Her soul inhales the pang; and freely drinks at the same fount of agony, and breathes over them the prayer of mercy. Love is that *attribute* in her nature to which all the *others* are subservient. It is the *shrine* at which they all bow, the *centre* to which they all gravitate. If her children do wrong, she freely forgives.

Has God given the mother all these noble affections, and does he feel less to his helpless, sinful, and erring children? Let God answer. "Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? yea, they may forget, yet will not I forget thee."

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# SERMON XVI.

## ON FORGIVENESS.

[Concluded.]

In our last, we showed that the compassion, tenderness, and love of our Father in heaven, are the origin of all the sublime affections in the human bosom, and from this acknowledged fact, have shown that he is infinitely more regardful of the welfare of his offspring than the tender mother, with whom he compares himself, is of the welfare of her sucking child. We now resume the subject.

In our text, we are called upon to forgive one another, as God has forgiven us. In examining this point, we are to be guided by what he has revealed. The question here arises, How many does God command us to forgive? He commands us to forgive *all*, even our enemies. This then must be forgiving them as he does. He therefore forgives all. He commands us to bless them that curse us, and to pray for them that despitefully use us, and persecute us, that we may be the children of our Father in heaven. Does God command us to do more than he is willing to do himself? No, he lives up to his own command. If God requires us to forgive, even as he

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does, and then commands us to love and forgive *all*, then he loves, and forgives *all*, otherwise he would violate his own command; and then there would be no resemblance between his forgiveness and ours. Even as God, for Christ's sake, hath forgiven you, so ought ye also to forgive one another.

Would you forgive all, and bring them home to glory? Yes. Will God? No, says the objector, he will not forgive his enemies, but his friends only. Then you must not forgive all. Do you ask why not? Because you are to forgive, *even* as God. He is the standard you are to imitate. If you forgive more than God, you are better than he. He cannot command you to do different from himself. If God require you to love and forgive *all*, while he himself will forgive only a part, then God acts contrary to his own command. We are exhorted in the text to *be kind, tender-hearted, and forgiving, even as he is*. Does your kindness, tenderness, and forgiveness extend to all, and desire the happiness of the universe? Yes. Then also does that of God, or else you are, in every sense of the word, better than he. You differ from instead of imitating God. If so, you are doing wrong, because you are violating the text. He commands you to be kind, tender, and forgiving *only as he is*; — and you contend that his kindness,

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tenderness, and forgiveness, extend to a part only, and that all the rest he will torture, world without end.

But, says the objector, God is now kind, tender, forgiving, and merciful to all; but he will not be so, when they enter eternity, for "the doors of mercy will then be shut." How do you know that? — who told you so? Will God change in some future day? If he change, he will not be the same being, he is now. I thought he was the same yesterday, to-day, and forever, without variableness or even the shadow of turning. I thought he was the same Jehovah in all worlds. Do you intend to make him kind, tender, and forgiving *here*, but unkind, unforgiving, and hard-hearted to a part of his offspring *hereafter?* If you intend to change both the nature and character of the Almighty in the future world, then you and myself are done arguing. That doctrine is, certainly, in a pitiful condition, which drives its advocate to the necessity of changing the Almighty wholly into another being to support itself. "God so loved the world," even when "dead in trespasses and sins," as to deliver up his Son to "taste death for every man." And being unchangeable, he could never hate them. In our text, God commands us to forgive as he has forgiven. How many does God forgive? Ans. As many as he commands you to forgive. How

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many is that? *All, even your enemies, — to bless and curse not.*

We will now introduce the question, — If God has not forgiven a man to-day, will he ever forgive him? I answer no, for he is unchangeable. We are too apt to think that our Creator is altogether such an one as ourselves, — that he loves one day, and hates the next, — that he is in reality angry one hour, and pleased the next, — or that he holds a grudge one moment and forgives the next, if we only ask him to do so. But all such ideas are calculated for children, — for babes in Christ. The Scriptures come down to the weakest capacity; but this is no reason we should always continue children, but rise in knowledge to the strength of manhood. We ought not to be "ever learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth." Paul said to his brethren, "when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you," &c. "When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child; but when I became a man, I put away childish things."

The Scriptures are calculated for every capacity, — for a child as well as a philosopher. We must rise from one degree of glory to another. We are not to fasten our minds down on the inventions of men, and live and die children. No;

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we must "forget the things that are behind, and reach forward to those that are before." As full-grown men, we are not to suppose that the prayer of any mortal can move the Almighty to pardon him. But, says the objector, if we *sincerely* ask God to do thus and so, he will certainly grant our requests. Very well, admit this for a moment. God, you say, will answer every *sincere* prayer. Now suppose two armies are to meet in battle, one from France and the other from Holland. The hour when the engagement is to commence is precisely one month from to-morrow noon. Every individual, of the two belligerent powers, is informed of the fact. Every day, there are millions of sincere prayers offered to God to give them the day. Holland, with one voice, prays for victory and for the preservation of her subjects; and France, with united supplication, prays right the contrary. How, we ask, are all those *sincere* opposing petitions to be answered? Impossible. Again, each denomination prays for the prosperity of its cause, and for the destruction of error. And as each believes all others to be in error, of course, pray for their downfall. If the Lord answered their petitions, all denominations, of course, would fall! One man prays for rain, and another that it may not rain. If God answered all these petitions, he would be



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as changeable, not as *one man*, but as the whole human family together.

As it respects God's pardoning the human race, I contend that this pardon existed from the beginning. Do not the Scriptures declare that God chose us *in Christ* before the foundation of the world? Yes, for "he calleth those things which be not as though they were." Well, could we be chosen *in Christ* without being pardoned? No, for the apostle says, "he that is *in Christ* is a new creature;" and, certainly, a man cannot be a new creature *in Christ* without being pardoned in the mind of Deity. If then in the omniscient mind of God, to whom there is no future, they were chosen *in Christ* before the foundation of the world, then in his mind, they must also have been pardoned before the world began. God never does a new act. By *pardon* we are not to understand the clearing of a guilty man from deserved punishment, but an entire deliverance from a disposition to sin. The period when we are to be released from sin, is through death, where the earthly nature, with all its wants and temptations to sin, falls, and the heavenly nature rises in incorruption and glory through a resurrection from the dead. Is not this the day of redemption, when we shall be set free? Yes, so saith the Scripture. Well, do not *redemption*, *remission*, and *forgiveness* mean the same thing?

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They do. Then our *pardon*, *remission*, or redemption will be *realized* through death and the resurrection. We will produce the Scriptures. "In whom we have *redemption* through his blood, even the *forgiveness* of sins, according to the riches of his grace." Here forgiveness and redemption are used synonymously, and are declared to be *through the blood of Christ*, that is, through his death, as a sacrifice for sin. Sin cannot exist beyond the sacrifice designed to take it away. He is represented as taking away the sin of the world, under the figure of a *Lamb*. Sin will come to a finish, under the first covenant, exactly where Christ said "it is finished," at which moment the vail, concealing the "holy of holies," will be rent in twain, and the second covenant be opened. If we step beyond what Christ has said, we may as well give up the Scriptures, and trust to our own vain imaginations. There sin will end; and that is *dismission*, pardon, or redemption from it. "O death! where is thy sting? O grave! where is thy victory? The *sting* of death is *sin*, and the *strength* of sin is the *law*, but thanks be to God, who giveth us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ."

Now, here it is represented, that our victory over *sin* and *death*, is to be *when* we shall rise to immortal glory. Our *victory* over *sin* is to be at the *same instant* with our victory over *death*; and

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who will deny, that our *victory* over *death* will be at the resurrection? The objector may as well deny our victory over *death* at the resurrection, as to deny our *victory* over *sin* at that period. The whole is said to be "through Christ." He was our "forerunner" and "first-fruits," to represent our condition *there*. When he expired he was free from *pain*, and when he arose he was free from *temptation*. So when we pass the same scene, we shall be like *him* who is our "resurrection and life," otherwise the harvest will not be like "the first-fruits."

God, then, pardoned the human race, *in Christ*, when he made them. How? Ans. By ordering their existence in such a manner, that they should be freed from sin through death and the resurrection. That is the day of our final discharge, the day when the prisoner shall be set free, the day when our redemption shall come. But, asks the objector, are we not to *realize* our pardon in this world? Ans. Only *through faith* in the *reality*. We look forward, and anchor our hope within the veil of death, and enjoy our pardon, or redemption, only by an eye of faith. This "faith works by love and purifies the heart." It causes us, in a great measure, to break off our sins by righteousness. But this has no influence whatever over the sins already committed. For *them* we must still continue to feel miserable. Pun-

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ishment is *certain*. From the sins that are committed, we only enjoy our pardon or redemption from them through faith in Christ, the resurrection. Paul told the believers, that if there were no resurrection, their faith was vain, they were yet in their sins. This proves that they only enjoyed the pardon of their sins through faith in the resurrection, otherwise I see no force in his language.

But, inquires the reader, why do you pray that God would pardon our sins? Ans. I do not pray to turn the Almighty from his will and purpose; but humbly trust, that I spend my days in searching out what "that perfect will of God is," and then pray in reconciliation to his revealed will. It is wicked to pray what we do not believe. "Whatsoever is not of faith is sin." I believe that God pardoned us from the beginning, and that this pardon will be realized through death and the resurrection. And when I pray that God would pardon our sins, I mean that he would grant us an evidence of that pardon, which unchangeably existed in his eternal mind, by enlightening our understanding in the Scriptures of truth, and giving us correct views of his character as a Being of tenderness and compassion to the children of men. So when we say, God has pardoned us, we do not mean that he has been moved by our petitions to do a new act; but that through

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the appointed means, he has so far enlightened our minds, that we have received an evidence of that pardon which existed with him from the beginning; and by faith we look forward, believing it will take place through death and the resurrection, as Christ has proved. By this faith we perceive the love of God, and break off our sins by righteousness. But while in the flesh, we feel a thorn, a hell of conscious guilt, for the sins we have committed, and though the penitent may beseech God, that this messenger of Satan, buffeting him, may depart from him, yet the answer will be, "My grace is sufficient for thee."

We now perceive how God pardons sin, and yet punishes us for it. The misery sin brings upon us is our just punishment, and to be released from it, by the free grace of God, through death and the resurrection, is our pardon and redemption. For example, we say, in a cloudy day, "the sun does not shine;" but still he does. The clouds, just above our heads, prevent his rays from shining upon us. The change is not in the sun. The clouds disperse, and we say, "the sun shines," while in fact he is ever the same. The Scriptures say, "our God is a sun." He is unchangeably the same in all his brilliant perfections. "Sin like a cloud, and transgression like a thick cloud," rise over the mind, and darken the understanding. Through

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this dark medium we look up to God, and think he has changed, that he is angry, and that thunders are rolling from his hand, while in fact the whole change is in us. The moment our minds are enlightened by the beams of truth we rejoice, and say God has forgiven us. We receive an evidence of pardon, and enjoy it through faith, while God has remained unchangeably the same.

While we are children in Christianity, we speak and act like children; and think if we all join together, and pray as loud as we can, as though the Lord were "deaf, or asleep, or on a journey," that we can prevail, and make him do as we wish. And while we are children, if we sin, we think the Lord is our enemy, and is angry. Now, this is all well enough for those, whose experience has gone no further. We are not to "despise the day of small things," but kindly receive such an one as a babe in Christ, and feed him with milk. But still it does appear to be a pity, that thousands, under the Gospel, should live and die children.

"Be ye kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you." Now, we are to forgive as God does. How is that? To hold a grudge one day, and if they ask our pardon, to forgive them the next? No, we must uniformly possess a kind, tender-hearted, forgiving spirit, laying up

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nought against any one. Forgiveness does not consist in laying up a store of malice and vengeance, till our enemy come and formally ask our forgiveness. No; he might never come, and then we could never forgive him. We are commanded to love and forgive our enemies, whether they ask it or not. So did our Saviour on the cross, and we are to exercise the same spirit of benevolence and meekness. We must, as our context says, put away all malice, wrath, and evil-speaking from among us, and be kind, tender-hearted, and forgiving.

Our Father in heaven is the most lovely and adorable of all beings! Under the light of his character, every uncomfortable thought vanishes, and the dawn of a blessed eternity bursts upon us in a flood of glory. By faith we penetrate the veil of immortality, and read our pardon and justification in letters of blood. Within that veil, we anchor our hope. Faith triumphs over the ruins of death, smiles at the darkness of the tomb, and through Christ within, the hope of glory, bids defiance to the crushing hand of death, and lights up its dreary mansions with the cheering beams of immortal day.

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# SERMON XVII.

## WHERE SHALL THE UNGODLY AND THE SINNER APPEAR?

"For the time is come, that judgment must begin at the house of God; and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the Gospel of God? And if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?"—1 PETER IV. 17, 18.

UPON this passage, the believers in endless misery lean for the support of that sentiment, and on many occasions it is quoted with an air of triumph, as though the passage itself, without comment, were sufficient to silence all objections. Here they have one advantage of Universalists; and of this advantage they do not forget to avail themselves; namely, the prejudices of early education. But we sincerely call their application of this passage in question, and shall stand forth in defence of the triumphs of Jesus Christ over all sin, and pain, and death, fully believing, that the hand of heaven "shall wipe tears from off all faces." We will attempt to show,—

First, What we are to understand by *judgment* beginning at the house of God.

Second, Who were the *righteous*, and in what sense they were *scarcely* saved.

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Third, Show who were the *ungodly*, and where they appeared.

*First, What we are to understand by judgment beginning at the house of God.* Jesus Christ chose him twelve disciples, and commenced the great work the Father sent him to do. To them he disclosed many events, that God would in a future day bring upon the world. He pointed them forward with more than human accuracy into the approaching revolutions of time, and painted out in noonday light, those astonishing disasters, that would one day burst like a thunder-clap on the thoughtless nations. He marked their certainty, and warned them accordingly. Among the many things, that lay buried in the vista of future years, was the destruction of Jerusalem. This was a point that most solemnly concerned the disciples of Jesus. It was no less than the destruction of their nation.

Christ was with his disciples in the temple, that splendid edifice which was forty and six years in building, and, in their presence and for the last time, addressed the stubborn Jews. He pointed out the many crimes, of which they and their fathers had been guilty in shedding the blood of the prophets, and persecuting those who were sent unto them as the messengers of Jehovah. They had also made void the law of God through their traditions. While pointing out these things, and

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setting them home like a thunderbolt to their hearts, he pronounced them hypocrites, blind guides, devourers of widows' houses, and declared, that all the righteous blood shed upon the earth should be required of that generation. While rehearsing these things to them, Jesus had a perfect view of all their approaching sufferings. Many of them were to be starved to death. He saw by a prophetic eye the indulgent father and fond mother weeping over their infant train, who were begging for bread, but had no way to procure it. Eleven hundred thousand he saw in a state of starvation, who were to fall by famine, sword, and pestilence. He saw their cruel enemies surround the walls of their city, who would allow no sustenance to be given them, but determined to reduce them by hunger and sword to one common grave. All these things, that were coming upon them, rushed at once upon the mind of the compassionate Redeemer of the world. The affecting scene moved so strongly upon his heavenly feelings, that he dropped the melancholy subject and burst into a flood of tears. He beheld the city and wept over it; "O Jerusalem! Jerusalem! thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, but ye would not!" He then left the temple for the

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last time; but as he was departing from it, his disciples, astonished at his denunciation, and regretting that such a magnificent edifice should be destroyed, exclaimed; "Master, see what manner of stones, and what buildings, are here! And he said unto them, there shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down." The disciples immediately asked him saying, "Tell us when shall these things be, and what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?" By the end of the *world*, we are to understand the end of the Jewish *age*. As they asked him the *signs*, portending this terrible destruction, so that they might know when it was nigh at hand, he immediately proceeded to point them out, and warned them to flee to the mountains of Judea for safety.

The signs were as follows; many false Christs should arise, there should be wars and rumors of wars, nation should rise against nation, kingdom against kingdom, and there should be famines, pestilences, and earthquakes in divers places. Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you, and ye shall be hated of all nations, for my name's sake. Then shall there be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be. The most prominent *sign* he gave them, and one that more immediately concerned

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his disciples, was, that they should deliver them up to be afflicted, and they should be brought before kings and governors for his name's sake. "But (says Jesus) when they persecute you in one city, then flee ye to another."

Christ gave his disciples plainly to understand, that when the Jews began their persecutions against his followers, then the destruction of Jerusalem was nigh at hand. After giving these instructions to his disciples he laid down his life, and on the third day he arose, triumphing over death and leading captivity captive. His disciples soon after commenced the spread of the gospel of peace, and waved the banners of the cross over kings and subjects, calling upon them to bow to the reign of Jesus Christ, who was King of kings, and Lord of lords. They proclaimed a religion so contrary to the partial notions of the Jews and the traditions of the elders, that it began at length to meet with violent opposition. The disciples, agreeably to the direction of Jesus, fled for safety from city to city, till the tumult and opposition became general. Christianity gathered force and popularity so rapidly, that the Romans, it appears, gave permission to the Jews to imprison and take life. The disciples and Christians had now no place of safety to flee to, from the gathering storm of persecution and death. Amidst these disastrous scenes,

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Peter called to mind the *warnings* and *signs* his risen Lord had pointed out as a solemn premonition, that the destruction of Jerusalem and of their persecutors was nigh at hand, and in view of the approaching calamity over which Jesus wept, Peter exclaims, "The time is come, that judgment must begin at the house of God, and if it begin first at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God?" Thus we see, that what is meant by *judgment* beginning at the *house* of God, is *persecution* beginning at the *Christians*, which persecution was a *sign* to them, that the destruction of that nation was nigh at hand. The reader will perceive, that what the apostle calls "*house of God*," he afterwards calls "*us*," in the same sentence, and must refer to the Christians, who are in many scriptures called the *house*, *temple*, and *building* of God. [See Heb. iii. 6. Eph. ii. 21, 22.] That the persecutions were stated by Christ as a *sign* of the impending judgment of God upon the Jews, is evident from the words of Paul, 2 Thess. i. 5, where he call them, "a manifest *token* of the righteous judgment of God" upon the unbelieving Jews, the persecutors of the Christians.

*Second, — Who were the righteous, and in what sense they were scarcely saved.* The righteous, mentioned in the 18th verse, mean the same persons called "*the house of God*," and "*us*,"

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in verse 17th, and has reference to those Christians *only*, who lived previous to the destruction of the temple, and not to any Christians that lived subsequent to that event; much less does it refer to all the righteous that have ever existed, or shall hereafter exist, as common opinion asserts.

Under this head, we were also to show in what sense these righteous were *scarcely* saved. It could not mean that their salvation in the future world was *scarce* or uncertain; for it is *certain* in the counsels of God, and in all things well ordered and *sure*. He has given to his Son the heathen for an inheritance and the uttermost parts of the earth for a possession. And all that the Father hath given him shall come unto him, and he will raise them up at the last day. He is mighty to save to the uttermost all that come unto God by him; and no one will deny that the righteous come unto him. How then can their eternal salvation be denominated *scarce?* Impossible. How then are the Scriptures to be reconciled with our text, when they declare eternal life to be the gift of God, — that we are saved by grace, — that help is laid upon one mighty to save, — that his arm is not shortened, that it cannot save; and that the power of God is to be exerted at the resurrection in making them equal unto the angels? The answer is easily given, — our text has no reference whatever to the immortal world, to a

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judgment at the end of time, nor to the final condition of the human family; but simply refers to the narrow escape of the Christians from the destruction of Jerusalem, when they fled, with their lives in their hands, to the mountains of Judea for safety.

In the 24th chapter of Matthew, Jesus clearly describes the dreadful scene. He says, — "Then let them which be in Judea flee into the mountains. Let him which is on the house-top not come down to take any thing out of his house. And woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck in those days!" [Why? Because they could not remain in the mountains, during the period that the city was besieged by the Romans.] "But pray ye that your flight be not in the winter neither on the Sabbath day." [Why? Because in the winter you would perish with cold, — and if your flight from the city be on the Sabbath day, the Jews will stone you to death for travelling more than three miles.] "For there shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be. And except those days should be shortened there should no flesh be saved;" [Saved from what? Ans. From death.] "but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened." That is, for the sake of the Christians who fled to the mountains, God shortened

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the days of the siege. Let us hear Dr. Adam Clarke, a Methodist commentator, on this,— "Josephus computes the number of those who perished in the siege at eleven hundred thousand, besides those who were slain in other places; and if the Romans had gone on destroying in this manner, the whole nation of the Jews would in a short time have been entirely extirpated; but for the sake of the elect, the Jews, that *they* might not be utterly destroyed, and for the Christians particularly, the days were shortened. These, partly through the fury of the zealots on the one hand, and the hatred of the Romans on the other; and partly through the difficulty of subsisting in the mountains without houses or provisions, would in all probability have all been destroyed, either by sword or famine, if the days had not been shortened."

Let us hear Clarke explain how these Christians were *scarely* saved. "But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved." "It is very remarkable, that not a single Christian perished in the destruction of Jerusalem, though there were many there when Cestius Gallus invested the city; and had he persevered in the siege, he would soon have rendered himself master of it; but when he unexpectedly and unaccountably raised the siege, the Christians took that opportunity to escape." Clarke says, "*unto*



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*the end*" means, "to the destruction of the Jewish polity." Therefore, when Peter says the righteous are *scarcely saved*, he had reference to the dreadful judgment which was coming upon the wicked and ungodly inhabitants of Jerusalem for shedding the blood of the righteous, and from this destruction the Christians escaped with their lives in their hands to the mountains of Judea for safety, as Jesus had directed them. They but just escaped, — they were *scarcely* saved.

The Christians also suffered persecution from the Jews; and Peter draws this inference from it, — If we, who obey the gospel of God, have to endure so many persecutions from the Jews, — if this judgment begins at us, how much sorer punishment will our enemies have to endure, who obey not the gospel of God? And if we, the righteous, are scarcely saved from this long-predicted destruction, where will the ungodly and the sinner appear? But how did Peter know that it was at hand? Because the persecutions, which Jesus had given them as a "*sign*" or "*token*" had then commenced at the house of God. The reader will now perceive, that Peter was not speaking of a judgment at the end of time, because the judgment of which he was speaking had then commenced, — "*The time is come.*" Neither was he speaking of Christians generally, nor of salvation in the future world; but of those

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Christians *only* who lived previous to the destruction of the Jewish polity, and of their being saved with *difficulty* by watching the *signs* and fleeing to the mountains of Judea, as Jesus had forewarned them.

Luke records the language of Christ more plainly to be comprehended than that of Matthew. "In your patience possess ye your souls. And when ye shall see Jerusalem encompassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh. Then let them which be in Judea flee into the mountains, and let them which are in the midst of it depart out," &c. We should be led to suppose, that after the walls of the city were surrounded by an army, it would then have been too late for the Christians to save themselves. But Christ as a prophet knew that Cestius Gallus would raise the siege, and fall back to make preparations for a more decisive attack, and thus afford the Christians an opportunity to escape. It is evident to every candid reader, that Luke expresses, in chap. xxi., all that Matthew does in chap. xxiv. and xxv. And that Luke does not refer to a judgment at the end of time is certain from the manner in which he concludes, which is as follows: "And take heed, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting and drunkenness, and the cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares * * * * * Watch ye, therefore,

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and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man." Here we perceive, that not the least allusion is made to a judgment at the end of time; because there would be no propriety in warning his disciples not to be *drunk* or *overcharged with the cares of life* at a judgment day thousands of years after their death. The day when the Christians were "to stand before the Son of man" was at the destruction of the Jewish polity, and it was to take place in the lifetime of some of the disciples. Christ says, "There be some standing here, that shall not taste of death till they see the Son of man coming in his kingdom." The day of Christ was therefore at hand, and the apostles were warned to keep it in view, and watch the signs that were to precede it. Peter was faithful to these warnings, and when he saw the *signs*, presaging its near approach, he exclaimed, — "*the time is come*," &c. This was the day of tribulation, when the Christians were *scarcely* saved from the dreadful fate that overtook their own countrymen, who remained blind till the things that made for their peace, as a nation, were hidden from their eyes.

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# SERMON XVIII.

## WHERE SHALL THE UNGODLY AND THE SINNER APPEAR?

[Concluded.]

In our last, we have attended to the first two divisions of our subject, — namely, what we were to understand by judgment beginning at the house of God, and who were the righteous, and in what sense they were scarcely saved. We now invite the attention of the reader to the remaining division of the subject. Third, *who were the ungodly, and where they appeared.* By the *ungodly* and the *sinner*, we are to understand the unbelieving Jews, the murderers of Christ, and the persecutors of his followers. It has *exclusive* reference to them and not to the *ungodly*, who lived subsequent to the destruction of Jerusalem, much less does it refer to all the wicked that have ever existed, or shall hereafter exist, as common opinion asserts. This needs no further explanation.

Under this head we were also to show *where the ungodly and the sinner appeared.* We have already had occasion to state, that Peter, in our text, refers to the destruction coming upon the Jews. The time was come when that judgment

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of persecution, which began at the Christians, was to be returned upon the heads of their persecutors, in sevenfold vengeance and suffering. Their city and nation were to be destroyed, and their magnificent temple, where their devotions were offered, was to be laid even with the ground. Not one stone was to be left upon another, but the whole was to become one general heap of ruins. Then, according to the prediction of Jesus, was there to "be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be." Then was "wrath to come upon them to the uttermost." Then was he to "take vengeance on them that know not God, and obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ." Then were "the children of the kingdom to be cast out into outer darkness, where there was wailing and gnashing of teeth." Then, as a nation, were "they to go away into everlasting punishment;" for "these were the days of vengeance, when all things that were written might be fulfilled," and "all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of Abel to the blood of Zacharias, should come upon that generation."

Titus led the Roman army against them, surrounded the walls of the city on the day of the Passover, where a great part of the Jewish nation were then assembled, and to which others had fled for refuge, being driven by the terror

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of his arms like chaff before the whirlwind. Here they appeared! Husbands and wives, parents and children, brothers and sisters, (one promiscuous throng,) were gazing in breathless solicitude, while consternation and dismay were depicted in every countenance, and fearful expectation pervaded every bosom! Death, a long lingering death, was gathering around them in all its horrors! Old men and young, maidens, matrons, and little children poured forth their lamentations to heaven, invoking the protection of the God of Israel. But, alas! "the things that made for their peace (as Jesus forewarned them) were hidden from their eyes!" Their hour was come, and the triumphant shouts of the enemy were heard around their stubborn walls, which (massy as they were) dropped to the ground under the subduing power of the battering-rams of war. With these massive engines of destruction, they laid the first two walls in ruin! But the third and last wall it was not in the power of the enemy to gain. The Jews fought with desperation, and by valiant exertions kept the enemy at bay, and for a while seemed to triumph in the fond hope of victory over the foe. The Roman army was driven to great extremity, and even to hesitation, while many of their most valiant men fell in action, and impending victory seemed to hang doubtful. In this moment of

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suspense, they came to a determination to make no further attack upon the city, but guard it and reduce its inhabitants to submission by famine. All supplies were accordingly cut off, and every avenue blocked up by the vigilant Romans. In addition to this, intestine divisions, civil wars, and pestilence raged within the walls of the city. Having no employment in fighting the enemy, they fell to butchering each other. These things proved their ruin, and their national sun went down in blood. Every day thousands closed their eyes in death through famine and pestilence; and thousands, by endeavouring to escape to the enemy and surrender themselves up as prisoners for safety and protection, were either cut down by the Roman sword, or met the same fate from their own countrymen. Here they appeared! All hopes of life cut off, nothing presented itself to their view, to end their woes, but the certain prospect of an untimely tomb! Fathers, mothers, brothers, sisters, gazing upon each other in silent expectation, saw death gradually advancing in all its horrors. They were driven to the most dreadful extremities, until (as Josephus informs us) "they devoured whatever came in their way; mice, rats, serpents, lizards, even to the spider," —and lastly, mothers were driven to eat the flesh of their own children! Here were lamentation and woe indeed!—such tribulation as our Saviour

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says never was, and never will be. In imagination, the mind runs back to the period and to the fatal spot. It surveys the painful scene, characterized by nought but moral and physical woes, — madness and revenge, cruelty and carnage, pestilence and famine, and all the mingled horrors of war! It surveys the starving child, clinging to the maternal bosom for help and protection, but alas! that bosom becomes its grave. Here the ungodly and the sinner appeared in deep despair! Unfeeling mortal, do you say that their punishment and sufferings were not sufficiently great, without adding that of immortal pain in the future world? Are you not satisfied, without arguing that they ought to suffer endless misery in addition to their woes? Look with an unjaundiced eye over this scene of distress; and, as you gaze, let justice (if not compassion) once more take the throne of the heart, and then pronounce the shocking sentence of your creed if you can.

That their sufferings were overwhelming is evident from Scripture as well as from history. In Lam. iv. the prophet Jeremiah says, — "The hands of the pitiful women have sodden their own children, they were their meat in the destruction of the daughter of my people." In Lev. xxvi. Moses describes their sufferings as follows, — "And I will bring a sword upon you, that shall

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avenge the quarrel of my covenant: and when ye are gathered together within your cities, I will send the pestilence among you, that shall make you few in number; and ye shall be delivered into the hand of the enemy. And when I have broken the staff of your bread, ten women shall bake your bread in one oven, and they shall deliver you your bread again by weight; and ye shall eat and not be satisfied. And if ye will not for all this hearken unto me, but walk contrary unto me; then I will walk contrary unto you also in fury; and I, even I, will chastise you seven times for your sins. And ye shall eat the flesh of your sons, and the flesh of your daughters shall ye eat." This did come upon the sinner and the ungodly, and it was "according to their sins." Moses, Jeremiah, and Jesus spake particularly of the sufferings of the Jews in the destruction of their city, and they all agree in concluding their chapters. Moses, in conclusion, says, "and they shall accept of the punishment of their iniquities, even because they despised my judgments, and because their soul abhorred my statutes; and yet, for all that, I will not cast them away, neither will I abhor them to destroy them utterly and to break my covenant with them, for I am the Lord their God." And Jeremiah, after describing their sufferings, in the 4th chapter of Lamentations, concludes with these words,—"The punishment

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of thine iniquity is accomplished, O daughter of Zion," &c. And Jesus, after denouncing upon them the judgments of heaven, in Matt. xxiii., concludes thus: "For I say unto you, ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord." Thus we see that they agree in testifying to the same fact, that the punishment of the ungodly and the sinner, which mean no other than the Jewish nation, in their overthrow and dispersion, as we have already noticed, shall end.

I see therefore no arguments, that can be drawn from our text, to prove a future judgment or endless misery in the immortal world. If the objector can see a shadow of evidence in this passage to support such a sentiment, yet I must frankly acknowledge that, for myself, I cannot. There is certainly no word in the text, that has the most distant allusion to the final condition of man. The *judgment* began at the apostles and Christians. But is the "*last judgment*" to begin at them? Certainly not. But, admit that it is; we would further inquire, did the last judgment begin as early as the days of Peter? Impossible. Then he could certainly not have had any allusion to such a day, for he exclaims, "*the time is come*, that judgment must begin at the house of God." Here the judgment to which he refers had commenced, or at least the *signs* portending it had

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commenced, and it was to end upon the ungodly inhabitants of Jerusalem. This fact is evident from the context, — "Beloved, think it not strange concerning the *fiery trial* which is to try you, as though some strange thing had happened unto you; but rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings, that when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy." From this quotation there can arise no misapprehension as to Peter's application of the text, nor of the persons it involves. They were the persecutors of the Christians, and no one will dispute that these were the Jews.

If then this judgment was at hand, it cannot of course refer to a period at the end of time; and it is in this case, equally certain, that the *scarce salvation* of the Christians can have no reference to the immortal world. These facts being irresistible, the argument must be wholly given up, that "the ungodly and the sinner" were to appear in a state of inconceivable torment beyond the grave, because the *condition* of "the ungodly" stands in contrast with the *scarce salvation* of the righteous, and this *salvation* or *deliverance* was to be in a day nigh at hand, and from a tribulation or judgment in which their adversaries and persecutors were to be involved; and the *signs*, by which the apostle was admonished of its proximity, had already appeared when he wrote the

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words of our text. The meaning of his words, I humbly conceive, is simply this, — The time *is come* when the persecutions, predicted by Christ as a *sign* of the approaching destruction of Jerusalem, must begin at us. And if we the righteous, who are innocent, have to endure so many "fiery trials," what will the dreadful punishment be of our disobedient persecutors? And if we are *scarcely saved* from this impending destruction, by fleeing to the mountains of Judea, where will our thoughtless and sinful nation appear? We have endeavoured to show you where they appeared, — have pointed out the narrow escape of the Christians, who were "scarcely saved," and referred you to the *signs* by which Peter knew this judgment was at hand. It is therefore unnecessary to offer any thing further in defence of our views, as the text is, no doubt, plainly understood by every reader.

We close this discourse by noticing one very common objection, made by our religious opposers, to our application of several scriptures. I do this, because I am not aware that it has been done by any Universalist as a *designed* answer to the objection. The substance of the objection is this: — *There is not a passage in the New Testament which speaks of a day of judgment, of the end of the world, and of the coming of Christ,*

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*but what Universalists apply to the destruction of Jerusalem. Then, they contend, "every man was rewarded according to his works," consequently, all subsequent nations are not to be rewarded, nor are they to experience a day of judgment.* In reply to this objection I would remark, that we are not answerable for the many passages which the Saviour and his apostles applied to that event. But if we make a wrong application of any scripture, why do not our opposers point out the error? We will now show why the apostles wrote so much in reference to that period. They do not so frequently speak of that event merely on account of the destruction of their temple, city, and nation, (though that might justify their frequent recurrence to it,) but there were circumstances of a more imposing and momentous character to attract their attention to that catastrophe. These were the abrogation of the Mosaic rituals and the introduction of a new order of things by Jesus Christ, of whom Moses and the Prophets wrote. This was a period when every Christian was to be delivered from the persecution of the Jews, and the spread of the Gospel was to be retarded no longer by their opposition. The Jews, as a nation, were to be punished for their deeds of blood, and that *spiritual reign* or *judgment* commence, which should pass upon all subsequent

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generations of men, rewarding every man according to his works. The *gospel reign* is called "the *judgment of the world*" by Jesus Christ, in the same sense that Moses judged the world fifteen hundred years by the law. Jesus says, "Think not that I will accuse you to the Father, for there is one that *judgeth* you, even Moses, in whom ye trust." From this it is evident, that Moses was then judging the Jews. But this covenant was abolished at the destruction of Jerusalem. Paul says, "he taketh away the *first* that he may establish the *second*." The word of God, in this covenant, is spiritual and sharper than any two-edged sword, — it is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart, while that of Moses was outward, and took cognizance of the conduct only. The objections of our opposers are therefore unsound. And though we apply those passages, which speak of a judgment, to the destruction of the Jews, yet that judgment or reign of Christ which then commenced, is yet going on, and will continue till all are subdued to himself. He then came in his kingdom, and will continue to reward every man according to his deeds till his kingdom ends. So we this day experience the effects of his coming, and of his judgment or reign, and are justified or condemned according as we embrace or reject the words of

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everlasting life. . We see, therefore, the propriety of the apostles' dwelling so much upon that great event, which should witness the passing away of the types and shadows, and the establishment of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

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# SERMON XIX.

## ON LONGEVITY.

"What man is he that desireth life, and loveth many days that he may see good? Keep thy tongue from evil, and thy lips from speaking guile; depart from evil and do good; seek peace and pursue it." PSALM XXXIV. 12–14.

Self-preservation, and the desire of protracting the momentary span of life, is the first principle of our nature, or is at least so intimately interwoven with our constitution as to appear inherent. So powerful is this desire, that in defiance of pain and misery, it seldom quits us to the last moments of our existence. To endeavour to lengthen out our lives is not only desirable, but is a duty enjoined upon us in the Scriptures, and is most beautifully and forcibly expressed in our text.

We might here introduce many observations, of a philosophical character, on *air* and *climate*, *meat* and *drink*, *motion* and *rest*, *sleeping* and *watching*, *&c.*, and show how sensibly they contribute to health; and we might furnish many examples of long life; but we pass these, and proceed to notice the affections of the mind, upon which our text is grounded.

The due regulation of the passions contributes more to health and longevity, than climate, or even the observance of any course of diet. Our



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Creator has so constituted our natures, that *duty*, *health*, *happiness*, and *longevity* are inseparably blended in the same cup. To suppress, and finally subdue, all the passions of malice, anger, envy, jealousy, hatred, and revenge, and to exercise (till they become familiar) all the noble passions of tenderness, compassion, love, hope, and joy, is a duty that heaven solemnly enjoins upon us, and in the performance of which our years will be multiplied. But we must guard not only our moral natures from the ravages of the corroding and revengeful passions, but also our physical natures, by observing the strictest rules of temperance in *eating*, *drinking*, *cleanliness*, and *exercise*.

The book of God commands us to "be temperate in all things." The observance of this duty gives us a firm constitution, robust health, and prepares us to participate in all the innocent and rational enjoyments of life. Here we may witness the goodness of the Divine Being in uniting our duty, happiness, and interest in one; and so firmly are they wedded together, and so absolutely does each depend upon the other, that they cannot exist alone. They are alike laid in ruins the moment they are separated. If we trace this idea still further, we witness the same wise arrangement, and the same incomprehensible skill and goodness, of the Author of our being, in the

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constitution of our mental natures. In these, also, he has nobly united our duty, happiness, and longevity in one. Jesus says, "Love your enemies; bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them that despitefully use you and persecute you, that ye may be the children of your Father in heaven." Paul says, "Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamor, and evil speaking be put away from you, with all malice, and be ye kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God, for Christ's sake, hath forgiven you."

Here, then, is our duty plainly pointed out. If we will exercise this spirit of benignity to our enemies, subdue all our revengeful passions, and indulge a spirit of love and friendship, of meekness and cheerfulness towards our friends and neighbours, we shall not only be as happy as our natures can bear, not only revel in all the rational enjoyments this life can impart, but we shall, in the common course of providence, live to old age. All those, with very few exceptions, who have lived to eighty, ninety, and one hundred years, have been remarked for their equanimity. They were mild-spirited, kind, cheerful, and of such a temperament, that neither misfortune, nor any outward circumstances, that agitated the world, could disturb their heaven-born repose.

Thus we see, that the path of duty, enjoined in

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the sacred Scriptures, is not only the path of peace and joy, but conducts to a good old age. The goodness of the Divine Being is most strikingly exemplified, in uniting health and temperance, happiness and longevity, and our duty to our fellow-creatures, all in one.

Long life and good days, however, depend more upon the state of our minds than upon almost any other circumstance. He who lives in fear and trouble, arising from any cause whatever; whether from contemplation of endless misery in the future world, or from the apprehension that his earthly prospects will be blasted, and his fortune laid in ruins, — or if he is continually involved in quarrels, broils, and tumults with his neighbours, has but little prospect of living to old age, and certainly no hope of seeing good days. He is in a constant hell. Here, then, we see the beauty and propriety of our text: "What man is he that desireth life, and loveth many days that he may see good? Keep thy tongue from evil, and thy lips from speaking guile; depart from evil and do good; seek peace and pursue it."

The first *condition* for a long life is, "keep thy tongue from evil, and thy lips from speaking guile." But the question arises, in what sense can the violation of that *condition* have any effect upon the length of life? The answer is at hand; the slanderer is ever a busy body in other men's

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matters. He is secretly endeavouring to injure his neighbours. He circulates falsehoods about them, from house to house. One and another hears the reports put into circulation. They call upon the author for an explanation of his conduct. Involved in trouble, arising from fear, guilt, and mortification, he tells a thousand falsehoods to clear up one. All this preys upon his inmost vitals, while perhaps with another, whom he has slandered, he is involved in a quarrel, and it terminates in a settled hatred; and a third case becomes an incurable distemper of rancor and revenge. Here is a man who by slander has rendered his existence wretched. He is like the troubled ocean, whose waters find no rest.

There is but little hope of his reaching the common age of man. Instead of seeing good days, he is walking in the regions of night and woe. Says the wise man, "where there is no fuel the fire goeth out, so where there is no tattler, strife ceaseth." Yes, "where there is envying and strife, there is confusion and every evil work."

Violent anger excites powerfully the caloric in the human system, boils the blood, and in this state throws it suddenly upon the brain. The powerful shock propels it instantly to the exterior surface, and, torrent-like, contracts it back again in redoubled fury upon the brain, and leaves the countenance pale and ghastly. It deranges in a

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great measure the mind, and unfits it for useful action. It darts its electric fire of vengeance along the optic nerve, expands the retina, and gives to every object a magnified and false appearance, while the very eyeballs, by a wild and savage glare, proclaim the dreadful storm that is raging within, and pouring the poisonous streams of premature death through all the healthful channels of existence! It suddenly braces the nervous system, and then on the opposite extreme leaves it depressed and weakened. It gradually brings on rheumatic complaints, and lays the whole system open to the most formidable and painful disorders, that afflict the human race. It cannot have escaped medical observation, that fevers and consumptions are much more frequent among persons who are very irritable, and exercise little or no rule over their passions, than among those who are of a mild temperament, either naturally, or from early restraint and education.

There is a connexion between the mind and the body, so subtile that it has hitherto eluded the eagle-eye of Physiology, and will perhaps remain inscrutable forever to human comprehension. But that this connexion exists is fully demonstrated by medical experience and observation. Many bodily disorders derange the mind, and have in many instances totally destroyed it. So, on the other hand, diseases of the mind affect the body

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in return, and *grief*, *despair*, and *melancholy* have so preyed upon the vitals as to emaciate the body, and bring it to the grave. It is not uncommon, that consumptions are brought on by *trouble* of mind, by *guilt*, and by *melancholy* and *grief*. And many instances have occurred, where persons in excessive violent anger have dropped down dead. What is so dreadful, when carried to extreme, must be very injurious to health, and long life, when indulged frequently and even moderately.

There being, then, such an intimate connexion between the mind and body, and so many thousands of ways in which one alternately acts upon, and affects, the other, and brings millions to an untimely grave, we see at once the propriety of not only guarding our health by temperance in eating and drinking, but more particularly by avoiding troubles of a mental character. These are generally brought upon individuals, families, and neighbourhoods, by the bad use of the tongue. Would you live long, that you may see good days? Then keep thy tongue from evil, and thy lips from speaking guile; seek peace and pursue it. Avoid every species of iniquity that would have a tendency to blast your own or the peace of others. Avoid it as you would the poisonous exhalations of the Bohon Upas, and fly it as you would the dreadful Samiel of the Arabian desert.

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## SERMON XX.

### ON LONGEVITY.

[Concluded.]

We have shown in our last number, that the truth of this text is based upon philosophy, and verified by experience and observation; that nothing is more destructive to health and longevity than to indulge in the revengeful passions of our nature; and that constant fear, grief, and melancholy are also destructive to the human constitution, and withering to the dearest joys of life. We have shown that violent anger, revenge, and most of the malignant passions, originate from the bad use of the tongue; and that, if we would live long and see good, we must give heed to our ways by following the injunctions of the text. We now propose a further discussion of this subject, addressed particularly to the young.

A single spark of fire has often wrapped a city in conflagration. Great effects not unfrequently flow from small causes. The apostle James says, see chap. iii. — "Behold also the ships, which, though they be so great, and are driven of fierce winds, yet they are turned about with a very small helm, whithersoever the governor listeth. Even so the tongue is a little member and boast-

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eth great things. Behold how great a matter a little fire kindleth! And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity; so is the tongue among our members, that it defileth the whole body, and setteth on fire the course of nature, and is set on fire of hell. For every kind of beasts and of birds, and of serpents, and of things in the sea is tamed, and hath been tamed, of mankind. But the tongue can no man tame; it is an unruly member, full of deadly poison." The apostle, in the above quotation, has reference to those who have so long indulged in evil speaking that it has become, as it were, an incurable habit. If any man makes a practice of slandering his neighbours, and disturbing the peace of the community, it is immaterial to what church he may belong, or what ostentatious professions he may make, he is, notwithstanding all this, destitute of Christianity.

It is a painful fact, that the religion of the present day is too much accommodated to the fashions and customs of the world. Let a man, for instance, use profane language, or get intoxicated, and he will readily be suspended from the communion of the church. But let him slander his neighbours, and little or no notice is taken of his conduct. And let him slander other denominations, and it becomes, as it were, a virtue; whereas the fact is, that the latter, according to the book

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of God, is much the greatest crime. It is therefore wise to lay, in early youth, a foundation for a tranquil, virtuous, and long life.

Thus you see, my young friends, that virtue and happiness, temperance, prosperity, and longevity, are inseparably connected by the Author of our being, who has made them to depend in a great measure upon our conduct. You have also seen, that sin and misery, intemperance in body, and also intemperance in mind, such as evil speaking, violent anger, commotions, griefs and troubles, and a premature grave, are likewise inseparably and wisely connected.

And now, my young friends, which will you choose? If you love life and desire to see many days, let me exhort you to choose the *former*, and to drink freely out of that golden cup in which every earthly joy of unbroken felicity is mingled by the unerring hand of divine mercy; and let me warn you to reject the *latter*, for in it are mingled the bitter drugs of misery. Be temperate in eating and drinking. Be temperate in all your pursuits in life, and in all your desires. Be temperate in your conduct; and "pitch upon that course of life which is the most excellent, and habit will soon render it the most delightful." Avoid not only every word and action that may lead to discord and contention, but, as our text says, depart from evil and *do good*, seek peace,

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and pursue it. Let us do good to all our fellow-creatures, and endeavour to overcome their hatred with love, and their evil with good.

Yes, my young friends, affectionately and solemnly would I urge you to begin early to curb your passions, and to study sweetness of disposition. It will soon become to you perfectly natural, and thus you will lay the foundation for a virtuous and tranquil old age. But, asks the youth, shall I live longer for subduing my passions and doing good, for seeking peace and pursuing it? Certainly. Our text teaches this; so does philosophy, and so do the Scriptures generally. Jesus Christ says, "Blessed are the *meek*, for they shall inherit the earth." That is, they shall long enjoy it. "Blessed are the peace-makers, for they shall be called the children of God." The fifth commandment says, "Honor thy father and thy mother, that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee." By honoring our parents, we are to understand a filial and submissive obedience to their precepts, by not departing from that way in which, with many exhortations, prayers, and tears, they sought to train us up. In this case, honoring them would of course require us to walk in the paths of virtue and temperance, and to live an honest, quiet, and peaceable life, which would insure the promise, and give us many days.

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Not only do the Scriptures promise long life to the peaceable, temperate, and meek, but they, on the other hand, just as solemnly declare, that "the wicked shall not live out half their days." This passage has occasioned much dispute among religious denominations; one affirming, that every man's time is appointed in the counsels of heaven by the decree of God, who "declares the end from the beginning;" and another affirming, that *it is not*, for the above passage teaches that the life of man may be shortened. But there is no occasion for dispute on this point, for they are both right, as we have seen in the course of our remarks. This passage is but the counterpart of our text. It is the decree of God that the wicked, the abandoned, shall not reach the extreme of human life, because they indulge in those very crimes, which, in the constitution of things, must inevitably carry them to an early tomb. Of the truth of this, we see thousands of instances in the world. And God has decreed, that the meek, the peaceable, shall reach the extreme of life, because they pitch upon that happy course of conduct which naturally leads to it. All that we are to understand by his *decree*, is, that he has inseparably connected the *end* with the *means*, by so constituting our natures, and so ordering his providence, that *sin*, *dissipation*, *anger*, and *revenge* shall not only destroy happiness, but short-

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en life, so certain as men pursue such a wretched course. And that the opposite course of conduct shall not only communicate happiness, but protract life, so certain as they engage in it.

Here then, my young friends, you may readily perceive how God punishes vice and rewards virtue. He does not do it by any abstract law, or arbitrary mode of procedure, but he has in infinite wisdom interwoven the whole in the very constitution of our natures, so that the wicked cannot go unpunished, nor the righteous unrewarded. To teach, that man can indulge in vice, and yet escape its punishment by future repentance, is not only dangerous to the morals of society, but is a direct impeachment of the divine administration, as it must in such case, be defective. And to teach, that men may live righteously and godly and yet go unrewarded, is equally dangerous to the morals of the community, as it is but discouraging them from engaging in a virtuous course of conduct. To teach, that men are to be rewarded in a future world for their *goodness* here, is but in substance saying that virtue is attended with mental misery, and so far as it fails of rewarding its possessor *here*, the balance is to be made up *hereafter*. And to teach, that men are to be punished in a future state for their *badness* here, is but in substance saying, that vice is attended with some

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mental joys, and so far as it fails of punishing its possessor *here*, the balance is to be made up *hereafter*.

It is readily granted, that the righteous may suffer. But we ought ever to make a plain distinction between *afflictions* and *punishments*, for the Bible does this. It is impossible, in the nature of things, that punishment can exist except in connexion with guilt. Paul and Silas were cast into prison and fastened in the stocks, on account of their religion. But nothing could disturb their mental peace, — their heaven-born repose. They joyfully sung psalms, and lifted up their voices in prayer to God in the calm enjoyment of a pure, unsullied conscience. They suffered *afflictions* that were, under the government of God, to work out for their good. There were no doubt others in that prison justly suffering for their crimes. To them it was punishment. Hence we see the distinction between them. The Scriptures say, "Great peace have they that love thy law; and nothing shall offend them." "There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked;" and he who says there *is*, contradicts Jehovah.

If you would, my young friends, avoid punishment, avoid sin. If you would be happy, and enjoy a long and tranquil life, follow carefully the directions of our text; for rest assured, that a

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contrary course of conduct will not only involve you in misery and wretchedness, but bring you to a premature grave. Let us then take warning, and not become our own executioners. Let us make the most of life we may, and not turn our present existence, which is one of heaven's choicest blessings, into a curse. Let us do good in our day and generation, and render ourselves blessings to mankind, by living soberly, righteously, and peaceably in the world. Let us do justly, love mercy, and walk humbly with God; "visit the widow and the fatherless in their affliction, and keep ourselves unspotted from the world."

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## SERMON XXI.

### GOD'S GOVERNMENT RECOGNISED.

"And they shall drive thee from men, and thy dwelling shall be with the beasts of the field; and they shall make thee to eat grass as oxen, and seven times shall pass over thee, until thou know that the Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will." DANIEL IV. 32.

THAT reason, as well as revelation, teaches an overruling providence, very few deny. There must exist in nature an omnipotent and benevolent Being to keep all her works in harmony; to touch all, even the most secret and subtile springs of the vast machinery of the universe; to regulate seed-time and harvest, summer and winter, day and night; and to throw the enrapturing charms of countless variety not only over the landscape, but over all that we behold in the heavens above, or in the earth beneath. Globes roll in the paths assigned them, and by some unseen hand are wisely kept from interfering in their orbits, and disturbing each other's motions. These facts demonstrate the existence of an omniscient, omnipotent, and Benevolent Being; and every event, transpiring in the government of the world, proclaims an omnipresent Jehovah.

He not only works in the majesty of the lightning, and in the grandeur of the storm, regulating

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and directing the whole in its sublime career, but he notices the fall of a sparrow, and numbers the very hairs of our head. Events, the most trivial in their nature, are the objects of his notice, as well as those of the most momentous character. Were not this the case, universal disorder and ruin would soon find their way into his works, break the chain of events, and reduce all, that we now admire, from its present harmony and glory, down to its original confusion and chaos. This conclusion is unavoidable, because some of the greatest events that have transpired in the world, owe their existence to something of a very trivial nature.

If God did not, in the general government of the world, direct also *small events*, then he could not be the author of those great events which flow from them. On this principle there might transpire countless events of the greatest magnitude without the direction and superintendence of Deity. The admission of *this* is but practical Atheism. It is acknowledging a God in words, but in works denying him. It alike makes *chance* the governor of the world to those who acknowledge such a God, as to those who wholly deny his existence.

In our text a presiding Deity is solemnly recognised by the prophet Daniel, and his supremacy over the affairs of men is throughout the whole



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chapter most strikingly set forth before the Assyrian king. He had dreamed a dream, which none of the wise men of Babylon were able to interpret. Daniel was called to him ; who, after making known to that proud monarch his destiny, involved in that dream, expostulates with him on his conduct. He did not threaten him with endless punishment in the immortal world, but informed him that there was a God that ruled the heavens, and presided over the affairs of men ; and exhorted him to forsake his iniquities. This is his language : "And whereas they commanded to leave the stump of the tree roots, thy kingdom shall be sure unto thee, after that thou shalt have known that the heavens do rule. Wherefore, O king, let my counsel be acceptable unto thee, and break off thy sins by righteousness, and thine iniquities by showing mercy to the poor, if it may be a lengthening of thy tranquillity. All this came upon the king Nebuchadnezzar. At the end of twelve months he walked in the palace of the kingdom of Babylon. The king spake, and said, Is not this great Babylon, that I have built for the house of the kingdom, by the might of my power and for the honor of my majesty ? While the word was in the king's mouth, there fell a voice from heaven, saying, O king Nebuchadnezzar, to thee it is spoken, the kingdom is departed from thee. And they shall drive thee from men, and

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thy dwelling shall be with the beasts of the field; they shall make thee to eat grass as oxen, and seven times shall pass over thee, until thou know that the Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will."

Nebuchadnezzar was the son of Nabopolasser, and the second king of Assyria. He was regent with his father in the empire 607 years before the birth of our Lord, and the next year he raised a powerful army, marched against Jerusalem, and took Jehoiakim, king of Judah, prisoner. While making preparations to carry him and his subjects into captivity, in Babylon, Jehoiakim solemnly promised submission, and begged the privilege of holding his throne under the sceptre of Nebuchadnezzar. This favor was granted, and he was permitted to remain at Jerusalem. Three years after this, he made an unsuccessful attempt to throw of the Assyrian yoke and regain his former independence. This brought on the general captivity of the Jewish nation, which lasted 70 years.

Nebuchadnezzar extended his conquests till he subjugated the Ethiopians, Arabians, Idumeans, Philistines, Syrians, Persians, Medes, Assyrians, and nearly all Asia to his sceptre. These splendid conquests, and being now king of kings, lifted up his heart with pride, that he caused a golden image to be reared on the plains of Dura. He issued a royal edict, and commanded the princes

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and rulers of all these nations, as well as their principal subjects, to assemble; and being assembled, he commanded them to fall down and worship his golden god. Daniel's companions refused to do this, and were cast into the fiery furnace.

From this circumstance, he was brought to acknowledge a Supreme Being, and even issued a decree, that any one who spoke amiss against the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego should be cut in pieces. But, as he was gazing upon the massy walls of Babylon,—a work of gigantic achievement; as he was surveying, from the height of his palace, the hanging gardens and lofty towers, (an aerial world!), as he was admiring his own magnificence, by the sentence of that God whom he had not glorified, he was driven from men, and, in the Hebrew style of expression, is said to have eaten grass like oxen. By this we are to understand, that he was suddenly seized with a disease, called by the Greeks lyconthrophy, and which is known among physicians at the present day by the name of hypochondria. It is a species of madness, that causes persons to run into the fields and streets in the night, and sometimes to suppose themselves to have the heads of oxen, horses, dogs, or fancy themselves to be like some other animal, and doomed to fare like them. And some have imagined themselves to be made of glass. At the

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end of seven years Nebuchadnezzar's understanding returned to him, and he was restored to his throne and glory. He died 562 years before Christ, in the 43d year of his reign.

It is our intention to consider this text, in a moral point of view, as applicable to all men of all ages, and in all conditions in life. While pursuing the various occupations to which our inclination or fancy may lead, we are too apt to lose sight of that Being who holds our destinies in his hand; and more particularly so in seasons of prosperity, when blessed with health and other sublunary enjoyments. Strange as it may seem, yet it is substantially true, that in proportion as man is successful in the accomplishment of his plans, he becomes arrogant and haughty in his feelings; and, instead of acknowledging his dependence on God, and feeling the bursts of gratitude for the favors and enjoyments heaven scatters in his path, he loses sight of the benign hand that blesses him, and, like the proud Assyrian monarch, ascribes all his prosperity to his own plans, and to the effect of his own peculiar management. He surveys the lands he has purchased, the beautiful buildings he has erected, the wealth he has accumulated, and in view of these achievements of his hand, as he is floating on the full tide of prosperity, he is ready to breathe out in exultation, — "is not this great Babylon, which I have built

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for the house of my kingdom, by the might of my power and for the honor of my majesty."

When success becomes common, man forgets his dependence on Him who rules in the armies of heaven, and over the affairs of men. It is our duty as intelligent creatures to exercise our reason in viewing things as they really are. He, who will not do this, but goes through life thoughtlessly, so far resigns the man, and assumes the brute. Even some, who bear the Christian name, proclaim against reason, call her carnal, and prostrate her, as it were, at the shrine of enthusiasm. They lean upon certain frames and feelings of the animal nature. They are so far driven from men. I say it is our duty, as rational intelligences, to hold our station in the scale of being, and to exercise our reason in viewing things as they are. We ought candidly and solemnly to weigh the blessings of God, and consider the relation in which we stand to him as our Creator and Benefactor. Who can tell the value of existence, or number its countless enjoyments? What a wonderful production is man! He has given us the most beautiful symmetry of parts, — has moulded our limbs with accuracy, and freely bestowed these admirable lineaments of form! He has formed the ear for sound, and awakened in its vocal chambers the flowing charms of music, the harmony of rejoicing nature, the dear voices of

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parents and children, and the sweet whisperings of love and friendship! He has moulded the transparent eye, bedded it in its bony socket, and on its retina painted the universe! He has bid it, not only to disclose all the varied passions of the soul, but to roll with softness and affection on the fond companion of our ways, on the countless beauties of nature, and bid it with infinite ease sweep the entire vault of heaven. He has set in motion the warm current of life, that rolls through our veins, pouring nourishment, health, and animation through all the channels of existence. It is he who throbs the heart, who heaves the lungs, and who bids the ten thousand complicated parts of this organized frame move on. In all this, his goodness is every moment felt, and yet we are thoughtless of these manifestations of his loving kindness. They are so common, that we have ceased to prize them. When sickness and distress come upon us, it is then we learn the value of health and ease, and are often awakened to the reality that the Most High rules.

In view of the trials incident to life, we hear the Psalmist exclaim, "Before I was afflicted I went astray, but now have I kept thy word." This seems to be the lamentable condition of man. When rolling in the calm tide of uninterrupted prosperity, and rejoicing in the vigor of health, he forgets there is a God, or becomes thoughtless that the heavens do rule, and begins, like the

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king of Babylon, to ascribe all his success to his own power, foresight, and management, and is practically an atheist. But, however thoughtless men may be, yet there is a God who governs the world, and will so order and direct his providence, that every one who goes counter to the principles of rectitude is *doomed*, *inevitably* doomed, to suffer the consequences.

There is too much practical atheism in the world. By this we mean, that there are too many of those who acknowledge a God in words, that deny him in conduct. Every one, who lives upon the bounties of heaven, who enjoys the sweets of existence, and remains thoughtless of God, is practically an atheist. As saith Paul, "They profess that they know God, but in works they deny him, being abominable and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate." He who goes on in the ways of transgression and multiplies his iniquities, must either believe there is no God, or else conclude that he does not rule over the affairs of men; and on this ground flatters himself that he shall escape punishment. And not only so, but in opposition to the express declaration of Jehovah, he believes that he shall enjoy a degree of happiness in the indulgence of sin. All such are driven from those rational reflections and moral principles, which virtually constitute the man, and have yet to learn, "that the heavens do rule."

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# SERMON XXII.

## GOD'S GOVERNMENT RECOGNISED.

[Concluded.]

EVERY man, who believes that the path of virtue is thorny, and that of vice is pleasurable, is not only deceived, but has not yet learned, that the Most High holds the reins of government, and dispenses to his creatures their rewards and punishments. It is evident, if every man solemnly believed that a course of sin would bring upon him certain and unavoidable misery, and that every species of dishonesty would lessen his fortune in the world, he would abandon his course, and turn his feet to the testimonies of God. The transgressor is therefore deceiving himself, is resting under a strong delusion, and is yet ignorant that the Almighty rules throughout his vast dominions. Certain it is, that a wicked man was never happy while remaining in that condition, and it is equally certain, that no one ever yet went unpunished.

To this point we intend to invite your serious attention in this discourse. The expression in our text, "till thou know that the Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men," does not only imply a knowledge of the existence of a Supreme

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Intelligence, who governs the world, but an obedience to the moral laws of his empire. On this proposition we purpose to offer a few rational, and not only rational, but irresistible arguments. We will first notice the condition of those who are guilty of heinous crimes, and then come down to the common walks of life, and bestow a few remarks on those who are indifferent about their condition, and who only guard their conduct so far as comports with the customs and manners of that portion of the community, who have no higher principle of action than to be considered respectable among men.

Though we come before the public to defend the doctrines of Christ, yet, my friends, you will bear in mind that it is also our duty to enforce his precepts, and exhort to the obedience of the Gospel. That we should point out the road of sin, error, and misery, and also endeavour to throw the light of heavenly truth on the pathway of human life.

We will begin with the murderer, who wantonly imbrues his hands in the blood of his fellow. So far as he has violated the laws of his country, he is a subject for public execution, and has nothing to hope for, at the tribunal of human justice. His misery, whether it arise from the contemplation of an ignominious death, from the fear of detection, or from the consciousness of having

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violated the moral principles of his nature, is alike insupportable, as well as indescribable.

Is he detected? Shut out from the world and confined in his loathsome cell, he is left to his own reflections, and to all the horrors of the gathering storm. But even admitting that he should escape detection, and be left to his own meditations on his deed of blood, he would, like Cain, breathe out in agony of soul, "My punishment is greater than I can bear!" He might, indeed, mingle with the busy throng,—he might even smile, and wear a face of pleasure, but behind this mantled mask he would conceal a heart of pain. He might, indeed, gaze upon the landscape, listen to the songs of the grove, and contemplate the glories of nature, but the charm, that once gave him ecstatic delight and solid joy, is vanished from his sight; and all, that once was fair and lovely, wears the frown of darkness and indignation. He gazes upon little children, and hears their artless and innocent prattle, reflects what he once was, and every joy that sparkles in their eyes sends a dagger to his heart. The rustling of a leaf strikes him with terror and alarm, and every passing breeze bears to his tormented soul the groans of the dying man, and conscience forces him to listen to the heart-rending tale of woe. Fain would he fly from himself, and enjoy one hour's repose; but alas! that God, who rules

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in the kingdom of men, has written a law in his heart, where he reads and feels his condemnation, and where conscience sits on the judgment-seat, constantly holds him arraigned at her tribunal, and fans up in his bosom the burning flames of hell! He may lie down on his pillow, but spectres haunt his brain; and awake, asleep, at home, abroad, he finds that he has rendered his own existence a curse. He lives in misery, and in darkness expires.

Let us next notice the thief, who plunders our property. His crime is of less magnitude than the above, but his guilt is in proportion. No one by such means has ever enriched himself. He, who obtains property by dishonorable means, is ignorant of its value, and will dishonorably spend it. He has forgotten, that God governs the world. Our state-prisons and penitentiaries not only (so far as human laws are concerned) reveal his fate, but speak his woes. But suppose he escape detection, and is only exposed to the naked and fearful grandeur of that law which God has written in the heart. He hears its thunders, and he feels its fires. He has taken from some fellow-being his hard earnings, and sees him, and perhaps his children, mourning their misfortune and suffering the miseries of adversity. Guilt takes possession of his soul, and misery, which the hand of time cannot extinguish, rolls its dark waves of damna-

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tion upon him, and drowns his dearest joys, while poverty marks him for her own.

God has so constituted his plans in the government of the world, that the plunderer cannot prosper. Inward horrors and fears of detection abstract his mind from the proper duties of life, so that misfortune and defeat find their way into his plans, which might otherwise by calm deliberation have succeeded; and disappointment and misery, satiety and disgust, and all the evils that are the offspring of his iniquity, commingling in a thousand ways, render his existence wretched. Relying upon dishonesty for support, he becomes but a midnight beggar. His slumbers are haunted by frightful dreams; and fear of detection, prisons, and dungeons are torturing his imagination and incessantly sporting with his broken peace. He is a stranger to the solid joys arising from the practice of virtue, is doomed to encounter all the miseries that attend his ill-chosen career, and to drink every drug of wormwood and gall that heaven has mingled in the cup of dishonor. He lives a nuisance and pest to society, and dies covered with infamy.

In all this we shall see the truth of our text exemplified, that God rules in the kingdom of men, and brings punishment, not only upon a haughty monarch, seated on the throne of nations, but upon every transgressor, however obscure

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may be his condition in the walks of private life. The sovereign decree of his empire is, — "THOUGH HAND JOIN IN HAND, YET SHALL THE WICKED NOT GO UNPUNISHED."

But we take our leave of flagitious crimes, and proceed to notice men in the common walks of life. Every man who makes riches, or public honors the chief end of all his pursuits, and gives all his attention to the attainment of his object, and overreaches in bargains whenever an opportunity offers, or sets various prices on his merchandise, according to the person with whom he deals, — such a man will never feel himself filled with riches, nor satisfied with honors. The reasons are obvious. He commences his career under the impression that happiness, contentment, and all the rational enjoyments of life, consist in wealth, and in human greatness. He soon finds himself in possession of as large a fortune as he first supposed would make him happy. But his desires for more having imperceptibly expanded, he finds within an increased restlessness, and even greater desires for *more* than when he first set out. He still believes, according to his original impression, that happiness lies in gold; and that the only reason why he has not obtained those solid joys in possession which he first anticipated, is because he still needs more. But though wealth may flow upon him in oceans, his cravings for

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more will ever swell beyond what earth can give, and leave him a more wretched being than he was at the commencement of his course. Here is his loss, — here is his punishment. God has not placed happiness in wealth.

> "A competence is all we can enjoy,
> O, be content, where heaven can give no more."

Or let him rise to that station of honor, which he now believes will satisfy him, and his ambition would aspire to one more exalted. Let him govern one kingdom, and he would desire to subjugate another, till the whole world bowed to his nod. And were every star an inhabited world, and did he possess means to invade them, his ambition would continue to soar till he ruled the universe; and, were there no object left to which he might still direct his ambition and continue to soar, he would sit down in despair, and, like Alexander the Great, weep and sigh for more worlds to conquer.

All this restlessness and misery arise from false notions of happiness, — from not realizing that the Most High rules in the kingdom of men, — and from a want of confidence in his word, which points alike the rich and the poor to that noble path of virtue and religion, where true happiness and unbroken peace forever reign. By men em-

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bracing virtue, and in their feelings and actions ever acknowledging the supremacy of Jehovah, inevitably lead to happiness and contentment. But in doing this we are not to deprive ourselves of the enjoyment of honest gotten wealth, nor of the rational pursuits and interchanges of social and domestic life. Religion was not given to deprive us of the common comforts and conveniences of life, but to sweeten them. Our Redeemer says, "Seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you." Sin and misery in this world are inseparable; so are righteousness and happiness. If they are not, then it remains for the advocates for a future retribution to show how men are to be sufficiently rewarded and punished in the future world.

There is, my friends, no solid happiness, no permanent satisfaction, but in the contemplation that God governs the world, and in the practice of pure and rational piety. This you may know by studying your own bosom. Have any of you thus far spent your days in striving to find perfect bliss in the various pursuits of life? Have you aspired to one object, abandoned it, and taken up another? If so, can you say that you have found the happiness you anticipated, and so earnestly sought? No! What is the reason? There is one thing needful. Whatever may be your pur-

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suit, if you are thoughtless that God governs the world, and, if instead of rendering him the homage of a grateful heart, you blaspheme his name, or are selfish and regardless of the happiness of your fellow-creatures, you must, according to the established laws of his empire, remain in that same restless and dissatisfied condition till you know by experience that the heavens do rule, — till you bow to the sublime requirements of his word. *That dissatisfaction*, varied according to the condition of moral character, is the punishment God sends upon us for our indifference. From this indifference we may rise to that unquenchable thirst for riches, already noticed, and our sufferings will receive new accessions according to our moral light. And from this we may rise to a desire for honor and power, till we are hurried on by ambition to conquest and slaughter, where we are doomed to suffer all the miseries a Bonaparte endured. From this we may rise to dishonor, fraud, and theft; and as we rise in crime, our miseries increase in degree, till we imbrue our hands in innocent blood, and thus render our bosoms a hell, and our very existence a burden.

Every man is in a condition of uneasiness, suffering, guilt, hardness of heart, and blindness of mind, exactly in proportion to his moral conduct. Let us then be wise; — and if we desire



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happiness, let us seek it in that course where the unerring word of God assures us it can alone be found. Let us acknowledge, "that the heavens do rule," and rest assured that He, who notices the fall of a sparrow, will not wink at our evil doings.

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# ARTICLE XXIII.

## DR. GRIFFIN'S LETTER TO THE AUTHOR.

### TO THE REV. J. B. DODS.

DEAR SIR :— I perceive that much has been expressed in the "Trumpet," of late, on the words of our Lord, about destroying "*soul and body in hell.*" A sermon from the Rev. Mr. Manley seems to have been the exciting cause of the remarks which have been made. It appears, moreover, that the same passage has elicited a variety of opinions in past years from different writers.

At the time when your article to the Rev. Mr. Manley made its appearance, we flattered ourselves that you would soon publish your individual views on this difficult text, and more particularly so, as we remembered the avowal on your part, that you had long ago formed your opinion on that passage, and, from the different expositions hitherto given, that you had seen no reason to justify any renunciation or change of that opinion. Are you not, then, under a kind of obligation to afford us all the light you possess on the subject? That light, surely, ought not to be "*hid under a bushel!*" It would ill comport

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with your general character, to be thus *anti-scriptural!*

You have in the South many warm friends. — For several years have they indulged the pleasing anticipation, that you would locate somewhere in Virginia. I hope yet to see the advent of that day, as we much need your services in this extensive field of labors, where none yet seem to venture a *fixed* settlement, — where all things are ripe for the harvest, *but the reapers are few!* Till then, let us at least hear from you through the medium of the GLORIOUS "TRUMPET" once in a while; and on the present passage, as soon as your convenience permits. We should also like to hear from you on the Lord's Supper, whether it was the Jewish Passover which he kept, or whether he established a new institution.

Were I not penning these lines to an old acquaintance and friend, I should offer many apologies for the liberty which I have now taken, and should derive my principal extenuation from the high estimate which I entertain of your talents.

I am, dear sir, yours very truly,

S. S. GRIFFIN.

WILLIAMSBURG, VA., Sept. 20th, 1839.

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# ARTICLE XXIV.

## DESTRUCTION OF SOUL AND BODY IN HELL.

"And fear not them which kill the body but are not able to kill the soul; but rather fear him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell." MATT. x. 28.

TO S. S. GRIFFIN, M. D.

DEAR SIR:—I must acknowledge, that it is with reluctance I come before the public to offer my views on a passage of Scripture, the subject matter of which has been, for some time past, agitated in the "Trumpet," in the "Expositor," the "Evangelical Magazine," and in books,—and which, by the various writers, who are brethren of the first order of talents, has been acknowledged a "*very difficult passage.*" My reluctance arises from those peculiar circumstances. I do not wish to be considered an innovator on the long-established opinions of my brethren, who are far my superiors in theological science,—nor do I covet the fame of being the author of any thing new. And more than all, I desire no controversy with my warm-hearted brethren, as I have no time for such a purpose, unless I trespass on the repose of my pillow.

The above are the only reasons why I have not given my views on this passage during the

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three or four years that it has been under occasional consideration. But having of late received several letters from my friends, in different sections, requesting me to give my views on the "*destruction of soul and body in hell;*" and as you have now called upon me through the columns of the "Trumpet," I feel it my duty to comply. I would, however, have our readers understand, that I have been thus repeatedly called upon for no other reason than because I addressed a short article, last June, through its columns, to Br. Manley, which they supposed laid me under obligations to state my views to the public.

The words now under examination were addressed by our Lord to his disciples, who were Jews, and in religion Pharisees. And every attentive reader of the Scriptures cannot but perceive, how very difficult it was to turn a Pharisee from his religion to any other faith. Our Lord was evidently sensible of this, which therefore accounts for the strong motive he placed before his disciples, to induce them utterly to disregard what men were able to do unto them, and to persevere in his cause. They were, like other Pharisees, fully persuaded, that their Messiah was to be an earthly king, to sit upon the throne of David, redeem them from Roman bondage, completely restore the kingdom of Israel to its original splendor, and subdue all other nations to

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their government and religion. True, they were sensible that their national condemnation, to a punishment in *gehenna*, had long since been pronounced by Jehovah, and recorded by the inspired penman. But, notwithstanding this, they were so blind as to believe that their Messiah, who was soon to appear, would not only avert their national ruin, but raise them to national grandeur, and that they would literally sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. To expunge from their minds such delusive hopes, and assure them that the sentence of their national destruction in *gehenna* was irrevocably registered in heaven, and would positively be inflicted, Jesus Christ spake the words of the text.

I will first offer a few remarks on the common opinion. This scripture is, I believe, invariably applied, by our opposers, to a punishment in the immortal world. It is argued with a seeming plausibility that such is, indeed, its plain sense, because the death of the body is spoken of as an act which men can do, and it is then added, that they are not able to kill the soul, but that God is abundantly able to destroy both soul and body in a place of future woe, called, in the text, *hell*. Hence they suppose the argument to be irresistible in favor of such a tremendous doom. But, even admitting this common opinion to be correct, yet we shall see, that it must encounter more difficul-

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ties, perhaps, than its self-confident advocates at first apprehended. Admitting, then, that this passage appertains to a punishment in the future world, it may be asked, what are the difficulties which such a disposition of the passage involves? A few of these I will now state in detail.

*First.* The language was addressed to his own disciples in private, on a particular occasion, namely, when they were first chosen, and commissioned to go and proclaim "the kingdom of heaven is at hand," and to work miracles. It was never repeated to them again; nor was this language ever breathed by our Saviour, nor by any of his apostles, in preaching to others. How is this conduct of theirs to be reconciled with the principles of common honesty, if the text involves the doctrine of endless misery in hell? If such were the case, would not Jesus have plainly stated this same threatening to the common people, and warned them of such a fearful doom? He certainly would, for he was faithful.

*Second.* Are the bodies of men to be *killed* or literally *destroyed* in a future hell? They are not. Flesh and blood cannot inherit a future state of being. What, then, are we to understand by destroying both soul and *body* in hell? All must perceive, that there is the same certainty that this mortal body shall be destroyed *there*, that there is that the soul shall. Both were to be

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destroyed in the *same place!* Now as this same mortal body, which men can kill, is not to enter a future world in a condition where it can be killed or even harmed as a body, is it not strong presumption, is it not irrefragable evidence, that this hell is not in another world? Does it not, to say the least, present an insuperable difficulty to the advocate of this sentiment? It does. The objector cannot but see its force.

*Third.* Men are able to *kill* the body, but are not able to *kill* the soul; but God is able to *kill* or *destroy*, them both. Now what are we to understand by killing the body? If the objector say, it means the extinction of animal life, then certainly the body is incapable of any further sensation, and is consequently free from all suffering and pain. Again,—"but are not able to kill the soul." What does this mean? Dr. Adam Clarke and others give us to understand, that they are not able to put the soul out of existence, because it is "*immaterial.*" Then if men were able to kill the *soul and body both*, it would be annihilation, according to the construction put upon it by our opposers. It then follows that, to destroy both soul and body in hell must mean their utter extinction, so that neither could be susceptible of sensation, suffering, or pain, any more than the clods that cover the tomb! This is certain; because what men are able to do only

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*partially* in the first adjunct of the passage, God is able to do *completely* in the last adjunct. Hence, to *destroy* soul and body in the last clause must mean the same as to *kill* the soul and body in the first clause. The objector will perceive, that this conclusion is absolutely irresistible, if he will carefully notice the *negative* of the first part of the text. After stating, that men kill the body, Christ says, but are NOT able to kill the soul. Here let me ask, Is God *able* to do what Christ here informs us men can *not* do, namely, to annihilate soul and body? If the objector says he is not; then I reply that God and men are placed in the same predicament by the objector. But if it be granted, that Christ meant to express God's ability to do *that very thing* which he clearly stated, and then said men could *not* do, it follows, of course, that God was able to *kill* both the soul and body, that is, annihilate them, as such. So you perceive, that, to allow common opinion its full force, it lays the cold hand of annihilation upon the face of the text; or else charges God with threatening his creatures with a doom he never meant to execute! Proving too much, it proves nothing, — for if man, soul and body, were *killed*, or *destroyed*, he could not suffer to all eternity, — admitting, at the same time, as they believe, that the soul means the immortal part. Suffering must terminate with such destruction.

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I will now proceed to state what the passage, in my humble opinion, means. It has long since been settled that the word, here rendered *hell*, is in the original *gehenna*. Literally it means the valley of Hinnom, which lay south of Jerusalem, and is sometimes called *tophet*. In this valley, the idolatrous Jews sacrificed their children to the god Moloch, in a most horrid and brutal manner. For this wickedness the following sentence was pronounced upon them. Jer. vii. 31—33. "And they have built the high places of tophet, which is in the valley of the son of Hinnom, to burn their sons and their daughters in the fire, which I commanded them not, neither came it into my heart. Therefore behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that it shall no more be called Tophet, nor the valley of the son of Hinnom, but the valley of slaughter; for they shall bury in Tophet, till there be no more place. And the carcasses of this people shall be meat for the fowls of the heaven, and for the beasts of the earth, and none shall fray them away." Speaking of Jerusalem, God says,—"I will make this city as Tophet." "And the houses of Jerusalem, and the houses of the kings of Judah, shall be defiled as the place of Tophet." From the above language we perceive, that Tophet had been defiled. This was done by king Josiah, so as to prevent the Jews from ever worshipping there

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again and sacrificing their children to Moloch, even if they should apostatize and become heathens. And, moreover, all the filth of the city was carried there, and a fire continually kept burning, for several hundred years. Dead bodies were also thrown there, and worms were continually preying upon them. Hence it was called "the place where the worm dieth not and the fire is not quenched." No place could be mentioned more abhorrent to the mind of a Jew than *gehenna*. Hence we see why *gehenna* was made an emblem of their national destruction. It was to be a destruction final and irretrievable. From it there should be no return to national life under the Mosaic dispensation.

To represent this tremendous destruction, our Saviour employed the words of the passage under consideration, as a warning to his apostles, who were Jews. As such, they were exposed to it, in common with their nation. There was no escape but by renouncing Judaism, and all the traditions of the Pharisees, and embracing the Gospel. Christ connected *gehenna* with the destruction of soul and body to convey to their minds an idea of its awfulness. It was to be such "great tribulation as was not since the beginning of the world to that time, no nor ever should be." The destruction of *soul and body*, or *consuming* the *soul and body* or *killing them*,

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our Saviour only used as a COMMON PROVERB of that day, with which his disciples were evidently well acquainted, and by which they understood the total destruction of any nation to which it was applied. It was a *proverb* used in reference to nations, or kingdoms, as bodies political, or religious, and not to individual beings.

Our Saviour had just called the disciples into his service. They were entirely ignorant of his doctrine. They had merely heard his sermon on the mount, and did not know that his religion would differ any further from that of Moses than this sermon had pointed out. They firmly believed that Christ was about to set up a temporal kingdom; and hence the doctrine of a crucified and risen Redeemer, reigning on a mediatorial throne, was as far from their thoughts as the Orthodox day of judgment is from common sense and Scripture. Still, they understood what he meant by the destruction "of soul and body in hell." This is evident, because when they did not comprehend his meaning on other occasions, we hear them making all the necessary inquiries; but here they made none. From this single circumstance it is evident, that they did not learn the meaning of this passage from Jesus, but that it was a *common proverb* of that day, — that, as such, it was used by our Lord to his dis-

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ciples, and that he did not intend that the words "*soul* and *body*" should be interpreted *literally* or *spiritually*. He merely meant to impress upon their minds that, if they, for fear of men, apostatized, God was not only able, but would destroy them with the Jews, as a nation, in such a manner as men were not able to destroy them, as a church or body of believers under the care of their heavenly Father. In the former case, their destruction would be final and irretrievable. They would never again be restored to national life in their own land, nor enjoy the religion of Moses in their temple worship. But, in the latter case, though men could put them to death with severest tortures, yet they could never exterminate his church, or that kingdom which it was his "Father's good pleasure to give them." It was built upon a rock, and the gates of hell could not prevail against it. To use the proverb, they could not destroy it "soul and body," or "root and branch." It was sustained by the power of God, and no persecutions or deaths could shake it. It should outride every storm of opposition, — tower above ruin and decay, and stand as immutable as the throne of eternity, till all beings should be subdued to God, — till God should be all in all. And thus far these words of Daniel in relation to it have been fulfilled, — "And in

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the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed." And we add; but it shall break in pieces and consume all other kingdoms, become a great mountain, and fill the whole earth.

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## ARTICLE XXV.

### DESTRUCTION OF SOUL AND BODY IN HELL.

[Concluded.]

LET us now turn to the Old Testament and see if there is not some evidence to sustain us in the above view of the subject. Let us see if it is not a proverb. I will pass over all those Scriptures which speak of God's utterly *consuming* nations, and of his threatening to *consume* them, which, I might show, have a bearing upon the subject under consideration. They are indeed the same proverb in substance, and only varied in expression; the same as if we should say, — Mr. Skinner has had a controversy with Alexander Campbell, and he has torn him up root and branch. He has demolished him soul and body. He has completely put him down to rise no more. Now these expressions are varied in language, yet by them we mean but one thing. We only mean to express entire defeat, *proverbially*. I therefore pass over such passages of Scripture, and leave the reader to examine them at his leisure, [see, for example, Exodus xxxii. 10. Num. xvi. 21. Deut. vii. 22. 1 Sam. xv. 18, &c.]

Leaving these, I will select one or two, which now occur to my mind, as having a direct bear-

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ing upon the case in hand. Isaiah x. 16, 17, 18, "Therefore shall the Lord, the Lord of hosts, send among his fat ones leanness and under his glory he shall kindle a burning like the burning of a fire. And the light of Israel shall be for a fire, and his Holy one for a flame; and it shall burn and devour his thorns and his briers in one day; and shall consume the glory of his forest, and of his fruitful field, *both soul and body*; and they shall be as when a standard-bearer fainteth." Here you perceive the prophet declares, that they shall be destroyed "*soul and body.*" This did not mean their punishment in another world, nor their "*moral death*," nor even the *natural death* of that whole people, but it was a *proverbial expression*, to denote their entire destruction as a nation. On this passage, Dr. A. Clarke says, "The fire of God's wrath shall destroy them both great and small, it shall consume them *from the soul to the flesh*, a *proverbial* expression; *soul and body*, as we say; it shall consume them entirely and altogether, and the few that escape shall be looked upon as having escaped from the most imminent danger." Here Dr. Clarke says, that to *destroy* or *consume* them, "soul and body," is a *proverbial expression*," and that in the Hebrew, it means "*from the soul to the flesh*;" yet he grants, that it did not even mean the *natural death* of all of that people against whom it was spoken. Scott



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says, that to destroy them *soul and body* means "*absolutely and finally.*"

This proverb originated among the Hebrews, and hence we see why our Lord's disciples perfectly understood him. The expression, *destroying soul and body*, is equivalent to destroying a nation, "*root and branch.*" The latter is, in fact, the same proverb in different phraseology. In proof of this, I will produce an instance. Malachi iv. 1, "For behold the day cometh that shall burn as an oven, and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly shall be stubble, and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the Lord of hosts, that it shall leave them neither *root nor branch.*" Now all commentators, so far as I am acquainted, apply the above passage to that very destruction of the Jews, to which I believe the language of Jesus, now under consideration, applies. And is there not a striking coincidence between the words of Malachi and Jesus? "Burning them up *root and branch*," and "destroying them *soul and body in Gehenna fire*," I consider as parallel passages. They both refer to the same people, and to the same long predicted and final destruction which God brought upon them, when their national sun went down in blood. On the passage in Malachi, (*destroying them root and branch,*) Scott says,—"it is *a proverbial expression* for extirpating desolation." Dr. Clarke,

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after stating that it refers to the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans, says, "*the day that cometh shall burn them up.*". "Either by famine, by sword, or by captivity, all those rebels shall be destroyed." *It shall leave them neither root nor branch.* "A *proverbial expression* for total destruction."

Now as both these expressions were proverbial among the Jews, there is certainly no more propriety in explaining what is meant by the *destruction* of the *body* and the *destruction* of the *soul* in the one passage, than there is in explaining what is meant by the *burning* up of the *root* and the *burning* up of the *branch* in the other. Though Clarke and others fully corroborate my views of this passage, in their comments on the Old Testament scriptures, yet when they come to the passage itself, now under consideration, they lose sight of what they there said. They all seem anxious to preserve this *text*, and the *second death*, as two monuments to perpetuate the doctrine of endless misery. All commentators of all denominations agree in applying them to that awful doom. But it would be an easy task to show, that the second death, according to their own writings, is also a proverb. It evidently refers to the same punishment as the text. Dr. Hammond says, — "*The lake that burneth with fire and brimstone* is called the *second death*, into

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which they are said to go, that are never to appear in the church again." See that excellent work, Paige's "Selections," p. 109. Whitby labors to show, from the targums of Onkelos, Uziel, and Jerusalem, that the *second death* is a proverbial expression, applicable to those "who were never," as Hammond says, "to appear in the church again." And as the Jews were destroyed as a people, never to appear in the Mosaic church again in their own land, so it is applicable to them. They were to be "punished with an everlasting *destruction*, from the presence of the Lord." 2 Thess. i. 9. "The man of sin," "the son of perdition," was in that day, "to be revealed, whom the Lord shall *consume* with the spirit of his mouth, and shall *destroy* with the brightness of his coming." 2 Thess. ii. 8. Now the above passages, and those of the same character, which speak of God's *destroying*, *consuming*, and casting into the *second death* (that is utter death) the Jewish people, and of *destroying* them "soul and body," and of burning them up "root and branch," are but so many forms of proverb, by which they expressed the same national ruin. It was a destruction which God had long threatened; which he declared he would execute; and that he was able to do it so thoroughly as to make it final and irrevocable, without the least possibility of their ever return-

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ing again to national life in the land of Judea. This God did do; and the present state of the Jews scattered over the face of the whole earth is, to this day, a literal fulfilment of the proverb. The nation, as a body, is killed, destroyed, and dispersed. Their national life or soul is killed. As such, they will never more see life; and being thus "twice dead, plucked up by the roots," they are cast into *gehenna* punishment; "into hell, where their worm dieth not and the fire is not quenched." Mark ix. 44. The word *gehenna*, rendered hell, which literally means the *valley of Hinnom*, is here used as an emblem of their national destruction, for God said he would make that city, Jerusalem, as Tophet. That it means a punishment in this world, where Sabbaths and moons are reckoned, and in the sight of all flesh, see Isaiah lxvi. 23, 24. "And it shall come to pass, that from one new moon to another, and from one Sabbath to another, shall all flesh come to worship before me, saith the Lord. And they shall go forth, and look upon the carcasses of the men that have transgressed against me; for their worm shall not die, neither shall their fire be quenched, and they shall be an abhorring unto all flesh." The above views are in perfect agreement with the corresponding passage in Luke xii. 5. Jesus says, — "Fear him, which after he hath killed hath power to cast into hell." Here I un-

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derstand him to say, that God had power to cast into hell after both *soul* and *body* were killed. In this case you will at once perceive, that the threatening cannot possibly apply to any single human body and soul either in the present, or future world. It is idle to say, after a human body and soul are killed, that they can be subject to any punishment in time or in eternity.

I would now say to you, Doctor, that I am aware some of our opposers in your section may say, that I have adopted the above mode of explaining the passage by applying it to the destruction of a nation *soul and body*, as a *proverb*, to shun the difficulties in which it would otherwise involve me. They may say, "cease calling it a *proverb* and you cannot explain it." For the satisfaction of such I will show them, that it can be plausibly explained, even if we lay aside its proverbial use. In the *first* place, Jesus did not say, — "Fear not them that kill *your bodies*, but are not able to kill *your souls*." Though he addressed a plurality of persons, yet he did not use the plural form, nor the defining adjective, *your*. He used the singular number, namely, "*the body*," and "*the soul*."

He was about to establish a new body, a church, of which himself was the head, and of which the disciples, as his servants, were to be the founders. The truth of the New Testament was the

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life of that body or church, in the same sense that the truth of the Old Testament was the national life of the Jewish church or body. Now it is evident, our Saviour knew that his disciples would, at his coming, stand in one of two relations to him and his cause. He knew that they would either be members of his church, or else that they would, for fear of men, apostatize and be members of the Jewish church, when he came in his glory. And, in view of those two conditions, he uttered the words of the text, which I will paraphrase thus; — I now enlist you in my service; and I desire you to remain steadfast in my cause, amidst all opposition and persecution, till my coming, which will take place before you shall have gone over the cities of Israel. And I entreat you not to fear them who will exert all their powers to kill and exterminate the body of my church, and who will finally succeed in putting you, my apostles, and your first converts, as a body, all to death; but at the same time, they will never be able to accomplish their purpose, namely, to destroy my doctrine, which is the truth, the life, the very *soul* of the body, the church. This is of God; and they cannot overthrow it, because others will rise up in succession as you are slain; and the truth, which is the life of my church, will stand against all the assaults of men. But rather fear God, — because, if you apostatize for fear of men, and for safety become members of the Jewish body, or

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church, and embrace the truth of that dispensation, which is the national life of that body, I warn you that, God is not only able to destroy the body but also the life, — for all the sacrifices, all the types and shadows, — the whole truth of the Mosaic dispensation, must expire with the body in your national destruction, and be no more forever.

The only objection which can be urged against the above paraphrase, is, that the soul, which men cannot kill in the gospel church, is not the soul, which God would destroy in the Jewish. But this objection is powerless, because Christ uttered the threatening in view of one of two conditions in which the apostles could be found at his coming. They would either claim the truth of the Christian religion as their life, or else that of the Mosaic religion. The Jews as a nation would rise and put to death the first infant church of Christ (which was the body) with the intention of exterminating its life or soul, by deterring others from embracing it. But they were found fighting against God, could not overthrow it, for it spread the more. In this contest, God was able to destroy these adversaries, soul and body, in gehenna, which he did do. I have said thus much on the supposition that it is not a proverb, to show the objector that I was not driven to call it a proverb because the *soul and body* could not

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be defined. I was driven to adopt its proverbial use by the force of truth.

I now submit the above to your consideration, sensible that you possess both the scholarship and the talents to bring what I have said to the test of scrutiny. If it be not the truth, as our Saviour meant to be understood, I do humbly pray God, that it may crumble at the touch of reality. I have no desire that my own mind, any more than the minds of my fellow-creatures, should be chained down in error. I rejoice, Doctor, to see the day, when the energies of the public mind are awakened to the sublime interest of eternal truth, and when the most keen and searching glances are sent into every creed. I rejoice that the doctrine, embracing the whole ghostly fabric of immortal pain, has already been convulsed to its centre, and is destined to fall in ruin, and be destroyed both soul and body. And God grant, that no infernal demon of trumpet-tongue, prowling through the dismal shades of heathen night, may ever again sound its resurrection to torment the living. I rejoice, that we shall at last meet with redeemed millions in future scenes, where the darkness, that broods on earth and clouds the mental vision, shall be past, and the true light itself shall shine.

Fraternally yours forever,

J. B. DODS.

PROVINCETOWN, October 12th, 1839.

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# SERMON XXVI.*

## THE SECOND DEATH ILLUSTRATED.

"And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened; and another book was opened, which is the book of life; and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them; and they were judged every man according to their works. And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire."—REVELATION XX. 11–15.

OUR text involves a subject of no ordinary moment, and with feelings of more than ordinary interest do I approach the extended field of investigation now opening before me. I feel no disposition to trifle with the doctrines of my fellow-men, nor with sacred things. I stand not here to wrest the Scriptures from their obvious import by any ingenuity of speech, but to make a righteous developement of truth, and thus humbly endeavour to present to my audience the sacred oracles in their naked grandeur.

This text you have with the best of intentions

* Delivered before the First Universalist Society in Taunton, Mass., on Sunday, February 12th, 1832.

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presented me for my consideration, and most cheerfully do I bring it forward for the edification of all sincere inquirers after truth. In doing this I have no wish to disturb others in their honest opinions, nor give them one feeling of distress; while I candidly and solemnly examine those errors in their doctrines, which have become so venerable on account of their age, and so sanctified on account of so many good, great, and learned men believing them, that to many it may seem bordering on blasphemy to call those errors in question. But duties, momentous as our existence, and sacred and dear as the strongest ties of *social*, or even *parental affection*, are laid upon us, and these duties we may not forego.

Did I believe the doctrine of endless misery true, I could have no inducement to hide its awfulness from my fellow-creatures, or to trifle with my own, or their final destiny. Were that sentiment true, and did I believe it, I would stand before you with other emotions than those that now pervade my bosom. And painful as might be the task, yet, with all these dear friends and unsuspecting children around me, I would, with a trembling hand, draw aside the curtains of the tomb, point you to the future world, and lay open and naked to your mental view, the dark regions of despair, and let you listen to the final groan of hapless millions, and to the roar of that tremendous ocean,

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whose surges are liquid fire, and whose surrounding atmosphere is living flame. Were I satisfied of the truth of this sentiment, then no feelings of friendship, or of fond attachment, — no riches, honors, or popularity should keep me one moment where I am. I would sacrifice the whole on the altar of truth, to the omnipotence of which all must sooner or later bow.

We are now about to examine a passage of Scripture, classed among those which by many are supposed to teach the doctrine of endless misery. There is probably no phrase in the Book of God, that has been more frequently pronounced by our religious opposers, than the "second death," or the "lake of fire and brimstone," when engaged in argument against universal holiness. They consider our text more forcibly to express the awfulness of that doom, which they honestly believe awaits the "finally impenitent," in the future world, than any other in the sacred oracles. So much force have preachers in different ages given to the scripture metaphor, — "the lake of fire and brimstone," that the impression became general of its being a burning world, — and the imaginations of thousands have been distracted in contemplating the indescribable horrors of the scene. For many years it would have been considered impiety to have believed it to be any thing less than an ocean

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of literal fire and brimstone; and it is of but recent date, that the better informed have substituted the milder phrase, — a hell of conscience.

But taking our whole text in connexion, it is even in the present day brought forward with a confidence bordering on certainty, that it is unanswerable by Universalists, being, as they suppose, completely at variance with the ultimate salvation of all men. Here they contend it is plainly stated, that Christ shall sit upon a great white throne, of indescribable splendor; that at the grandeur of the scene the earth and the heavens shall recoil, be suddenly wrapped in flames, pass away with a great noise, and be blotted out forever from the catalogue of existence; that at the same instant the sepulchres of slumbering generations shall give up their dead, and that the undivided attention and the strongest sensibilities of the universe shall be awakened to the interest of that day for which all other days were made; that the whole human family shall then be judged; and that all those whose names are not written in the book of life, shall be sentenced to endless misery in the future world, which is expressed in the text by a *second death*; a *lake of fire*.

Previous to our noticing the *second death*, we will attempt to show that we have no revelation of such a judgment day, and that the language generally quoted to prove it, has no possible

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reference to the subject. And here we would remark, that the Egyptians worshipped the sun, moon, and other hosts of heaven as the gods that governed the world, and produced all the changes, prosperous or adverse, that took place among men. The man whose life was marked by misfortune, was supposed to have been born under an unlucky planet, which was the god that directed his fate. If a nation suffered conquest, being torn to pieces and captivated, it was represented by all the planets being darkened over the land, or falling from their places, and thus withdrawing their shining.

The Hebrews while in servitude among the Egyptians learned their notions of worship; and even after they were liberated by Moses, they did homage to the hosts of heaven. It is therefore reasonable to conclude, that when these Hebrews were visited by national judgments, that the prophets would use the popular language of the day in describing them. The prophets preserved this eastern mode of figurative expression in all their writings, and so did the Grecians and Romans, and Jesus Christ and his apostles. When judgments were brought upon nations, all the sacred writers represent it under the figure of the sun and moon being darkened and stars falling, and the earth passing away and dissolving. In proof of this, see Isaiah chap. xii. where the

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prophet represents the fall of Babylon. "For the stars of heaven and the constellations thereof shall not give their light; the sun shall be darkened in his going forth, and the moon shall not cause her light to shine. * * * * * Therefore I will shake the heavens, and the earth shall remove out of her place," &c. In chapters xxiv. and xxxiv. the prophet represents the destruction of Tyre and Idumea by the earth and heavens as clean dissolved, as passed away, and fallen to rise no more. Ezekiel, in chapter xxxii. describes the fearful fall of Egypt as follows;—"And when I shall put thee out, I will cover the heaven, and make the stars thereof dark; I will cover the sun with a cloud, and the moon shall not give her light. All the bright lights of heaven will I make dark over thee, and set darkness upon thy land, saith the Lord God." See also Joel, chap. ii. And see the words of Christ, Matt. xxiv., Mark xiii., and Luke xxi. See also 2 Peter, chap. iii. We have now referred to all the passages in the Bible, except one, which divines quote to prove the destruction of the earth, sun, moon, and stars at the end of time. But you perceive, that they all refer to the overturn of governments, and the destruction of nations. This is a fact, substantiated by the context of those several records, and it is a matter of astonishment to me, that any

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of them should ever have been brought forward to prove a judgment at the end of time.

We will now introduce the last passage on this subject in the Bible, and give you the comments of Dr. Adam Clarke, the most profound scholar that ever wrote in defence of the Methodist doctrine, and show you, that we are not alone in our application of such scriptures. Rev. chap. vi. "And when he had opened the sixth seal, the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood. And the stars of heaven fell unto the earth, even as a fig-tree casteth her untimely figs when she is shaken of a mighty wind. And the heaven departed as a scroll when it is rolled together, and every mountain and island were moved out of their places." Let us now hear Dr. Clarke. "[*A great earthquake*] — A most stupendous change in the civil and religious constitution of the world. If it refer to Constantine the Great, the change that was made by his conversion to Christianity, might be very properly represented under the emblem of an earthquake, and the other symbols mentioned in this, and the following verses. [*The sun*] — The ancient Pagan government of the Roman empire was totally darkened, and, like a black hair sackcloth, was degraded and humbled to the dust. [*The moon*] — The ecclesiastical state of the same empire became as blood, was totally

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ruined; their sacred rites abrogated, their priests and religious institutions desecrated, their altars cast down, and their temples destroyed, or turned into places for Christian worship. [*The stars of heaven*] — The gods and goddesses, the demi-gods and deified heroes, of their poetical and mythological heaven, prostrated indiscriminately, lay as useless as the figs, or fruit of a tree shaken down before ripe by a tempestuous wind. [*And the heavens departed as a scroll*] — The whole system of Pagan and idolatrous worship, with all its spiritual, secular, and superstitious influence, blasted, shrivelled up, and rendered null and void as a parchment scroll when exposed to the action of a strong fire. [*And every mountain*] — All the props, supports, and dependencies of the empire, whether regal allies, tributary kings, dependent colonies, or mercenary troops, were moved out of their places, so as to stand no longer in relation to that same empire, and its worship, support, and maintenance as they formerly did. [*And island*] — The heathen temples, with their precincts and enclosures cut off from the common people, and into which none could come but the privileged, may here be represented by islands, for the same reasons." Dr. Clarke would have applied the above to the destruction of Jerusalem, had he not come to the conclusion, that the Revelations were written after that event. He howev-



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er says, — " All these things may literally apply to the final destruction of Jerusalem," &c. This we believe to be the fact. He then refers to Dr. Dodd, Newton, and Lowman, and shows that they apply such figurative language to the destruction of nations ; and, in justification of such an application, he refers the reader to the words of Isaiah, Ezekiel, and of our Lord, which we have already noticed.

Perhaps the hearer may now wish to inquire, whether he, who sat upon the great white throne, was not the Son of man ? We answer it was. Then asks the hearer, does not the text refer to the end of time, and to the literal destruction of the earth and heaven ? It does not. We have shown you, that all the passages in the Bible on which people rely to support that sentiment have no reference to the catastrophe of dissolving worlds. Their contexts will not justify such an application. This may suggest to the mind of the hearer another question. Is not the coming of the Son of man to judge the world to take place at the destruction of the earth ? I answer, we have no such revelation. In proof of this, we will here notice the scripture account of the coming of the Son of man given by Christ himself.

The first passage is in Matt. x. 23. " Ye shall not have gone over the cities of Israel till the Son of man be come." Matt. xvi. 27, 28.

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"For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father, with his angels, and then he shall reward every man according to his works. Verily I say unto you, There be some standing here, which shall not taste of death, till they see the Son of man coming in his kingdom." Matt. xxiv. 30, 34. "And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven; and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. * * * * * Verily I say unto you, this generation shall not pass till all these things be fulfilled." See the corresponding passages, Mark viii. 38; Mark xiii. 26, 30; Luke ix. 26, 27; Luke xxi. 27 — 32.

We have now referred you to every passage in the New Testament, where Jesus speaks of his coming. It is the language of Christ himself, with which we are not at liberty to trifle. And, as he has solemnly declared in every instance, that he would come in *that generation*, or in the *lifetime* of some of the persons he addressed, or *before they had gone over the cities of Israel*, to reward every man according to his works, you and I have no authority to contend, that his coming is still future, or confined to some last day when the earth and heaven shall literally pass away, and the whole human family be congregated before him for trial. No, — he came in his

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kingdom nearly eighteen hundred years ago, and put an end to the ceremonial law, by destroying the temple consecrated to ceremonial worship, by rendering to the Jewish and other nations according to their works, — and by commencing the judgment of the world by his Gospel, — and his judgment or reign, which then began, is to be continued and pass upon succeeding generations.

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# SERMON XXVII.

## THE SECOND DEATH ILLUSTRATED.

[Continued.]

We now perceive, that there are two principal judgment days revealed in the Bible. The first was under the ceremonial law instituted by Moses, which judgment day lasted till it was abolished by the coming of Christ, and then the judgment day under the Gospel commenced. This point I believe has been generally overlooked. I would here observe, that God is "judge of all the earth," and employs in this work no agent, only so far as to reveal to men the laws of his kingdom, which rule over all. He revealed the laws, appertaining to the first dispensation, to the Jewish nation, through the agency of Moses. And the continued enforcement of these laws was the continued reign or judgment of Moses over the Jews. Consequently, Moses is represented as being among them, and judging. Christ says, "They have Moses and the Prophets," — that is, they had the laws and will, which God revealed to the Jewish nation, through the agency of those servants. Again he says, — "Think not that I will accuse you to the Father, for there is one that judgeth you, even Moses, in whom ye

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trust." We are not to understand by this, that Moses, being dead, had any thing to do with the government of the Jews. We are only to understand that God *judged*, or in other words, *ruled* his people for two thousand years by those laws, which he had revealed to them by his servant Moses, who sat, as it were, upon a throne of judgment among that people.

God, through Christ, revealed to the world the doctrine of life and immortality. He established a dispensation that far exceeded the former in glory. The first was temporal, the second eternal; the first embraced one nation, the second the universe. Christ has taken a glorious throne, and still continues to judge the world by the spirit and truth of his Gospel. His reign is the last, and his kingdom shall consume and break in pieces all other kingdoms, and all dominions shall serve and obey him. That Christ received his throne, and commenced the judgment of the world by his Gospel at the destruction of the Jewish state, is certain from his own words, — "The Son of man is as a man travelling into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom and return. And when he was returned, having received the kingdom, he commanded his servants to be called, so that he might reckon with them," &c. From this it is evident, that he commenced the judgment of the world *when he received his kingdom*.

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And if this judgment is not to take place till the end of time, then till that period Christ will be without a kingdom. If this be so, then he is as yet no king, nor has he commenced his reign. But as he came in his kingdom before his disciples had "gone over the cities of Israel," it is certain, that he *then* commenced the judgment of the world, — he *then* "reckoned with his servants," — and "*then* rewarded every man according to his works." The *judgment day* under the law by Moses *then* closed, and God is now judging the secrets of men's hearts by Jesus Christ.

The prophet says, "He shall not fail, nor be discouraged, till he hath set judgment in the earth." Jesus says, "For judgment am I come into the world." Yes, he declares, that "now is the judgment of this world; now shall the prince of this world [the Jewish hierarchy] be cast out, and I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me." All the rites and ceremonies of the first covenant, which Moses established by the direction of God, were to pass away before the gospel covenant could be established, and the judgment, that is, the reign of Christ, commence. Paul says, "He taketh away the *first*, that he may establish the *second*." And the moment he was seated on his great white throne of gospel purity, the Jewish earth and heaven fled from his face, and there was no place found for

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them. We now understand the expression, — "Zion shall be redeemed with judgment and her converts with righteousness," — that is, by the judgment, or reign of Christ, all things in heaven and earth are to be reconciled to God, and God shall be all in all.

Having explained by the Scriptures of truth what we are to understand by the earth and heaven passing away, and shown that such language, being figurative, was not designed to teach the literal destruction of the earth, — and having shown that the coming of Christ in his kingdom has no reference to the end of time, but to the commencement of his reign, — and having noticed the scripture doctrine of God's judging the Jews by Moses under the law, and lastly of his judging the secrets of men's hearts by Jesus Christ, under the Gospel, we now pass on to notice the *second death*, which of course implies a *first*.

In doing this, I shall pursue an untrodden path. On this subject I have had my opinion made up for several years, and on perusing the many expositions given to the public, I have had no occasion to change that opinion.

Our opposers suppose, that by the *first* death is meant the death of the body, and by the *second* is meant an eternal death in the future world, which consists in the most exquisite sufferings that the imagination can conceive. It must be

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granted by all, that a second death not only presupposes a *first*, but implies that it must be of the same character with the *first* death, — or that there must at least subsist between them an analogy sufficiently strong to justify the subsequent phrase, *second death*, as relative to its antecedent, — a *first death*. But what resemblance is there between the death of the body, which is a total loss of all sensation and pain, and a state of the most exquisite suffering in the immortal world? None at all. Then they do not stand in relation to each other, so as to justify the expression of *first and second death*.

On the other hand, the generally received opinion among Universalists seems to be, that by the *second death* is meant the Christian apostasy, which commenced in the days of the apostles, and which John noticed in his address to the seven churches of Asia. He says, "Thou hast a name that thou livest and art dead." Again, — "He that overcometh shall not be hurt of the second death." Though there is much ingenuity in the arguments adduced in support of this opinion, and not a little plausibility, yet they have never been satisfactory to my mind.

If men should embrace the Gospel, fall away, embrace it a second time, and again fall away, it would of course be a second death. It would therefore require a second apostasy from the

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Gospel to make out a second death. They must *twice* lose the same life and *twice* endure the same death. For men, who are dead in trespasses and sins under the law, to embrace the Gospel, and then fall back into a state of unbelief, or error, does not make out two deaths of the same nature, inasmuch as the same gospel life had not been *twice* lost. It is further evident, that the Christian apostasy is not the second death, because John declares in the context, — "Blessed and holy is he that hath a part in the first resurrection; on such the second death hath no power." By this I understand the believers, who were raised from all their trials and persecutions into the full and peaceable enjoyment of Christ's kingdom at the destruction of the Jewish state, and means the same as the words of Jesus, — "Thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just." If they had apostatized from the Gospel, then, in direct opposition to the words of John, they would have had a part in the second death, admitting the second death to have been the Christian apostasy. But their "faith was perfected," and their "hearts were established unblamable in holiness before God, even the Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, with all his saints." This is the "time the saints possessed the kingdom,"— that "they sat upon thrones, and judgment was given them."

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We now proceed to show, that the *first* and *second* death mean the first and second destruction of the Jews as a nation, which took place at the destruction of their *first* and *second* temple. We will show, that the second death is *national*, not *moral*.

God established the Jews, as a nation, in the land of Judea, under a government purely religious, which constituted their national existence. Their first temple was built by Solomon, and was considered the dwelling-place of the MOST HIGH, where he more immediately manifested the divine presence and glory to his worshipping people. Though he was said to "dwell between the Cherubims," and to fill that house with his glory, yet they considered him as present throughout the whole land of Judea, directing their national concerns. Their government was a theocracy. On this account they would not admit, that God was present among the heathen in such a sense, that they could worship him, or even "sing a song of Zion in a strange land." In the land of Judea *only* could they, as a nation, live before him, enjoy his presence, and worship in his temple on Zion's hill. When their government was destroyed, and they were led away into captivity among the heathen, they considered themselves as a nation dead before God, and banished from his presence.

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That God promised the Jews the continuance of *national* existence and prosperity, in the land he had given their fathers in case of their *obedience*, is a subject so obvious to every reader of the Jewish Scriptures, that it would be a waste of words to attempt formally to prove it. And that he again and again threatened to cast them out of his presence from the land of Judea, and scatter them among the heathen, in case of their *disobedience*, is also plainly taught.

To throw light on the exposition we are now about to give, we would remark, that, when a nation were roused from stupidity to a sense of their impending destruction; when their energies were awakened into intense action by the approaching horrors of war and its attendant calamities, the sacred writers not unfrequently represent it, by the striking figure of being dead and buried in the grave, and starting suddenly from its silent bosom to a state of condemnation. And when a nation, or people were in a state of oppression and servile bondage, or persecution, and were suddenly to be brought into a higher state of enjoyment, or to return to their former privileges, it was also represented by a resurrection, but it was a resurrection to life. In evidence of this, see John v. 28, 29; and Daniel xii. 2; both of which we shall have occasion to notice hereafter. It may not be improper in this place to introduce

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some orthodox authority to support our views. Parkhurst says, that the Greek word, *anastasis*, translated *resurrection*, which is derived from the verb *anistemi* signifying *to rise*, has the following signification; "A standing on the feet again, or *rising* as opposed to *falling*;"—"a rising, or resurrection of the body from the grave." Dr. Campbell says, that "the phrase, *anastasis ton nekron*, is indeed the common term by which the resurrection, properly so called, is denominated in the New Testament, yet this is neither the *only*, nor the *primitive* import of the word *anastasis*. It denotes simply being raised from inactivity to action, or from obscurity to eminence, or a *return to such a state* after an interruption. The verb *anistemi* has the like latitude of signification; and both words are used in this extent by the writers of the New Testament as well as by the LXX" in the old. My hearers will please keep the above in mind.

We will now proceed to prove, by an appeal to the Scriptures, that the captivity of the Jews, as a nation, when Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, overturned their government and burnt their *first* temple, is the *first death*. Leviticus xxvi. 39. "And they that are left of you shall pine away in their iniquity in your enemies' lands; and also in the iniquities of their fathers shall they pine away with them." Ezekiel xxiv. 23. "But

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ye shall pine away for your iniquities and mourn one toward another." Ezekiel xxxiii. 10, 11. "Therefore, O thou son of man, speak unto the house of Israel, thus speak ye, saying, If our transgressions and our sins be upon us, and we pine away in them, how *should we then live?* Say unto them, As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; . . . . . turn ye, turn ye from your evils ways; for why will ye die, O house of Israel?" Here we perceive, that they were not to die a *moral* death, for they were already morally dead. And this *moral* death was the very cause that should produce *national* death.

These are a few of the many scriptures we might bring forward to prove, that the house of Israel pined away in their iniquities, and died as a nation in the land of their enemies; but these few abundantly establish the fact, that the captivity of the Jews among the heathen on *account of their transgressions* was considered a *national* death. They died to all their religious privileges, lost their *national* existence, and pined away in their iniquities in the land of their enemies.

It now remains that we show, that their return to their land at the end of their captivity, when they rebuilt the temple under Cyrus, is represented by a resurrection to *national* life. Ezekiel xxxvii. 3—14. "And he said unto me, Son of man, can these bones live? And I answered,

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O Lord God, thou knowest. Again he said unto me, Prophesy upon these bones, and say unto them, O ye dry bones, hear the word of the Lord. Thus saith the Lord God unto these bones, behold, I will cause breath to enter into you, and ye shall live; and I will lay sinews upon you, and will bring up flesh upon you, and cover you with skin, and put breath in you, and ye shall live; and ye shall know that I am the Lord. So I prophesied as I was commanded; and as I prophesied there was a noise, and, behold, a shaking, and the bones came together, bone to his bone. And when I beheld, lo, the sinews and the flesh came up upon them, and the skin covered them above; but there was no breath in them. Then said he unto me, Prophesy unto the wind, prophesy, son of man, and say to the wind, Thus saith the Lord God, Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe upon these slain, that they may live. So I prophesied, as he commanded me, and the breath came into them, and they lived, and stood up upon their feet an exceeding great army. Then said he unto me, Son of man, these bones are the whole house of Israel; behold they say, Our bones are dried, and our hope is lost; we are cut off for our parts. Therefore prophesy, and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord God; Behold, O my people, I will open your graves, and cause

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you to come up out of your graves, and bring you into the land of Israel. And ye shall know that I am the Lord, when I have opened your graves, O my people, and brought you up out of your graves, and shall put my spirit in you, and ye shall live; and I shall place you in your own land; then shall ye know that I the Lord have spoken it, and performed it, saith the Lord."

Thus we see, it is most plainly revealed, that when the house of Israel sinned, and became careless and insensible respecting the favors of God and the threatenings of his word, they were suddenly roused from their dreadful slumberings by the approach of the king of Babylon, who burnt their temple, led them into captivity beyond Babylon, and held them in bondage seventy years. There they pined away in their iniquities, and became as a valley of dry bones. They were dead to all their privileges and enjoyments as a nation. Their government was demolished, and their national existence was no more. They were not only dead in this sense, but in their graves, and buried. They hung their harps in mournful silence upon the willows, along the cold streams of Babylon, and exclaimed, "How shall we sing the Lord's song in a strange land!" But their bones were gathered, flesh came up upon them, their graves were opened, the earth gave up

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its dead, and they were brought into the land of their fathers, their temple was rebuilt by order of Cyrus, their theocratical government was established, and they lived once more as a nation before God.



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## SERMON XXVIII.

### THE SECOND DEATH ILLUSTRATED.

[Concluded.]

We are now to prove, that the events recorded in our text took place at the destruction of their second temple, when their government was again demolished, and they as a nation were destroyed and dead before God.

In order to bring this part of our subject plainly before you, we shall have to make a pretty extensive appeal to the Scriptures; and I harbour but little doubt, that I shall abundantly satisfy my hearers of the correctness of my views on the second death.

The Jews, though subject to the Romans, were nevertheless permitted to enjoy their own theocratical government, and all their modes of worship in the temple. John xviii. 31. "Then said Pilate unto them, Take ye him, and judge him according to *your law*. John xix. 7. "The Jews answered him, We *have a law*, and by *our law* he ought to die, because he made himself the Son of God." From these scriptures it it is evident, that the Jews had a government distinct from the Romans. But they had killed the true prophets, made void the law of God through

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their traditions, worshipped idols, and made their children pass through the fire to Moloch in the valley of Hinnom. They were filling up the measure of their fathers, the day of vengeance was approaching when all the blood shed upon the earth, from Abel to Zacharias, should come upon that generation. Blind to approaching ruin, they slept as it were in carnal security in the grave of iniquity and darkness, were dead before God in their sins, and rejected their promised Messiah.

From this state of security and blindness, they were to be suddenly roused to a state of national condemnation and death at the coming of Jesus Christ in his kingdom, which was at the destruction of their second temple, when Titus, the son of Vespasian, led the Roman army against them, demolished their government, and led them captive among all nations. This was their *second death*, called a lake of fire. God's judgments upon the Jews, we will presently show, were represented by fire.

We will first establish the fact, by concurrent scripture testimony, that our text has reference to the *second* scattering of the holy people at the destruction of the *second* temple, when the daily sacrifice, there offered up, should be taken away. Daniel ii. 44. "And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed; and the kingdom shall

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not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever." Here is proof positive, that the *mediatorial kingdom* was set up in the days of the Roman kings, and of *that kingdom* Christ *then* took the throne. Let us now examine if the opening of the books, and the judgment mentioned in our text, did not *then* take place. Daniel vii. 9 — 14. "I beheld till the thrones were cast down, and the Ancient of days did sit, whose garment was white as snow, and the hair of his head like the pure wool; his throne was like the fiery flame, and his wheels as burning fire. A fiery stream issued and came forth from before him; thousand thousands ministered unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him; the *judgment was set*, and the *books were opened*. . . . . I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him; his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed."

In the language of the prophet above quoted, there can arise no misapprehension as to the time when this judgment should set. He plainly de-

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clares, that it should be at a time when the kingdom should be given to the Son of man; when he should commence his reign; that then the judgment should set, and the books be opened. This is almost in the language of our text.

Now it is certain, that this language of the Prophet can have no reference whatever to a general resurrection of the literally dead, nor to a judgment day at the end of time; for all denominations grant, that Christ, instead of receiving his kingdom at the immortal resurrection, and *then* commencing his reign, will deliver up his kingdom and terminate his reign. And in support of it, they adduce the words of Paul in 1 Cor. xv. 24. "Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule, and all authority and power." How, then, "in the name of common sense," can the judgment in our text, and the opening of the books, have the least possible reference to what people call the last judgment day? To contend for this, is not only flying in the face of Scripture, but is contradictory to their own opinions. If our text refer to a fancied judgment at the end of time, then Christ cannot receive a kingdom, nor be crowned king, till that period arrives; still they grant that he now possesses a kingdom, and is himself Kings of kings. But we have proved, that

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the judgment referred to in our text, was at the commencement of his reign, when he received his kingdom, (thirty-seven years after his resurrection,) and not at the termination of his reign.

But we are not yet done; we carry our subject still further, guided by the lamp of unerring truth. We will now show you, that not only the judgment, and the delivery of those whose names were written in the book, referred to in our text, but the resurrection took place when the Jews, called the holy people, were scattered, and when the daily sacrifice, at the destruction of their temple, was taken away. John v. 28, 29. "Marvel not at this; for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in their graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good unto the resurrection of life, and they that have done evil unto the resurrection of damnation." But, says the hearer, has not this passage reference to the last judgment day, when all shall rise immortal and be judged? It has not; neither is there a passage in the Book of God, that teaches a judgment beyond the immortal resurrection of the human family. That this scripture has reference to the deliverance of the Jewish Christians, who were to be raised from all their persecutions and sufferings to an elevated state of honor, life, and enjoyment at the destruction of the Jewish state; that it refers to the

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persons whose names were written in the book of life, and who had a part in the "first resurrection," called "the resurrection of the just," and over whom "the *second death* had no power"; that it refers to these on the one hand, and to the unbelieving Jews on the other, who were roused from their dark hiding-places of security to condemnation, and consigned to a *second* national death; that this scripture has reference to *that period*, and to those *two classes* of character, we will substantiate by the oracles of truth. Daniel, chap. xii. "And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people; and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time, and at that time shall thy people be delivered, every one that shall be found *written in the book*. And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt." That this is a parallel passage with that in John, is, I believe, denied by none.

Here, then, we learn, that they were to start out of the dust, and that all those whose names were found written in the book of life, were to be *delivered*, and the rest *condemned*, at a period when "there shall be a time of trouble, such as there never was since there was a nation, even

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to that same time." And Christ himself, speaking of the destruction of Jerusalem, says (Matt. xxiv. 21); "For then shall there be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be."

But let us read on further in Daniel, chap. xii. "Then I Daniel looked, and behold, there stood other two, the one on this side of the bank of the river, and the other on that side of the bank of the river. And one said to the man clothed in linen, which was upon the waters of the river, How long shall it be to the end of these wonders?" [By the *wonders*, he means the time of trouble, the delivery of those who are written in the book, and the awaking of those who sleep in the dust of the earth. Let us, then, hear the answer to this question.] "And I heard the man clothed in linen, which was upon the waters of the river, when he held up his right hand and his left hand unto heaven, and sware by him that liveth forever, that it shall be for a time, times, and a half; and when he shall have accomplished to scatter the power of the holy people, all these things shall be finished." [Here, then, this heavenly messenger has made solemn oath, that these dead are to awake out of the dust, and that all whose names are written in the book, are to be delivered at the destruction of Jerusalem, when the Jews, the holy people, were scattered. Is this angel a

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false witness? God forbid. But we are not yet done with this point. We will read on, and pile evidence on evidence, and let you hear a greater than this messenger settle the question.] "And I heard, but I understood not; then said I, O my Lord, what shall be the end of these things? And he said, Go thy way, Daniel; for the words are closed up, and sealed till the time of the end. Many shall be purified, and made white, and tried; but the wicked shall do wickedly; and none of the wicked shall understand, but the wise shall understand. And from the time that the daily sacrifice shall be taken away, and the abomination that maketh desolate set up, there shall be a thousand two hundred and ninety days."

Let us now appeal to the words of Christ, and hear him settle the question. Matt. xxiv. 15, 16. "When ye, therefore, shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, (whoso readeth let him understand,) then let them which be in Judea, flee into the mountains." Now here Jesus calls Daniel by name, quotes his words, and points us forward to the destruction of Jerusalem for their fulfilment. The point is then settled that this resurrection, and the deliverance of those written in the book, took place in the generation Christ addressed, and when the holy people were scattered.

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By the sea giving up the dead, and death and hell delivering up the dead in them, we are to understand that no dark devices, nor secret hiding-places could protect the Jewish nation from that impending judgment which God, in his counsels, had determined to bring upon them. Their national powers of darkness, and spiritual wickedness in high places, were to be made manifest to all. They said in their hearts [Isaiah xxviii. 15]; "We have made a covenant with death, and with hell are we at agreement; when the overflowing scourge shall pass through, it shall not come unto us; for we have made lies our refuge, and under falsehood have we hid ourselves." But though they had thus secreted themselves, yet *death* and *hell* delivered them up to national destruction. Verse 18. "Your covenant with death shall be disannulled, and your agreement with hell shall not stand; when the overflowing scourge shall pass through, then shall ye be trodden down by it." Amos ix. 3. "And though they hide themselves in the top of Carmel, I will search and take them out thence; and though they be hid from my sight in the bottom of the sea, thence will I command the serpent, and he shall bite them." The above language is used in reference to the living, who are represented as hiding themselves under falsehood and lies; as taking refuge in the bottom of the sea, and as making a cove-

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nant with death and hell, to protect them from national ruin, but all in vain; our text says, they were given up, judged out of the books, [the books of the law,] and cast into the *second death.* They were dead in sin; and this *moral* death exposed them to *national* death. "If ye believe not (says Jesus) that I am he, ye shall die in your sins." This certainly cannot mean that they should, in the future tense, die a *moral* death. They were already *morally* dead. But it means, *in the same sinful condition you now are, you shall die a national death, because you believe not that I am he.* To believe in Christ, who is himself the word of eternal life, is to have our names written in the book of life. Consequently, all the believing Jews escaped the second death, to which they, as a nation, were doomed. They fled, according to the directions of Christ, to the mountains of Judea for safety, till the dreadful siege was over. Not a solitary Christian perished in that destruction.

The hearer will bear in mind, that the second death and the lake of fire are used synonymous in our text. We will here show, that God's judgments are not unfrequently represented by the figure of fire. Ezekiel xxii. 19—22. "Therefore thus saith the Lord God, Because ye are all become dross, behold therefore I will gather you into the midst of Jerusalem. As they gather silver,

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and brass, and iron, and lead, and tin, into the midst of the furnace, to blow the fire upon it, to melt it; so will I gather you in mine anger, and in my fury, and I will leave you there, and melt you. Yea, I will gather you, and blow upon you in the fire of my wrath, and ye shall be melted in the midst thereof. As silver is melted in the midst of the furnace, so shall ye be melted in the midst thereof; and ye shall know that I the Lord have poured out my fury upon you." Here you perceive, that Jerusalem is represented to be a fiery furnace, in which they were to be melted as metal. But by reading the chapter you may learn that it has reference to their overthrow as a nation, and their dispersion among the heathen. We will produce one more instance, where the Scriptures represent a nation in their destruction as having their land turned into a lake of fire Isaiah xxxiv. 8—10. "For it is the day of the Lord's vengeance, and the year of recompenses for the controversy of Zion. And the streams thereof shall be turned into pitch, and the dust thereof into brimstone, and the land thereof shall become burning pitch. It shall not be quenched night nor day, the smoke thereof shall go up forever; from generation to generation it shall lie waste, none shall pass through it for ever and ever." Here we perceive, that the dust of the land is represented as turned

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into brimstone, and all its streams as rolling forth floods of boiling pitch, and yet it means nothing more than the temporal judgment of God upon that people.

Our text is plain, we presume, to every hearer, and we now dismiss the subject. In conclusion, we simply inquire, are the Jews to remain in this second death? Let Paul answer. Romans, chap. xi. "For if the casting away of them be the reconciling of the world, what shall the receiving of them be, but *life from the dead.*" * * * * * "For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, (lest ye should be wise in your own conceits,) that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in. And so all Israel shall be saved; as it is written, There shall come out of Zion a Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob. For this is my covenant unto them when I shall take away their sins."

Here we have evidence, that these dead are again to be brought to life. They are to come forth from their graves; the dark veil shall be rent from their eyes, and "the ransomed of the Lord shall return and come to Zion, with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away."

From this lamentable catastrophe of their over-

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throw and dispersion, and their present unhappy fate as a people, let us take warning, and not abuse the choice blessings God has bestowed upon us as a nation. Let us rightly value our civil and religious liberty, and remember, if we become corrupt as a people, and unmindful of that Being, who holds the destinies of nations in his hand, we too shall be hurled from our high station of honor to degradation and ruin. Ever bear in mind, that moral death is a sad prelude to national death.

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# SERMON XXIX.*

## DEDICATION AT AMSTERDAM, N. Y.

"If a man say, I love God and hateth his brother, he is a liar, For he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?" — 1 JOHN IV. 20.

THE purpose for which we are now assembled is, to dedicate this edifice to the worship of the living God, who is the Saviour of all men, to the preaching of the ministry of reconciliation revealed to the world by Jesus Christ, and to the purity of that religion which gives to man his sweetest enjoyments in life, and his fondest hopes of surviving the ruins of death.

I stand before you on this occasion with feelings of peculiar interest. This is the home of my childhood and youth, sacredly endeared to me by many pleasing associations, — by many fondly cherished delights, around which memory still hovers with emotions better felt than expressed. I find myself surrounded with many of those who were the companions and associates of my early days, and with whom I have so often engaged in the sports attendant on boyhood. But alas, how changed the scene! — Those, who but yesterday,

* Delivered at the Dedication of the Universalist Church, in Amsterdam, N. Y., Wednesday, September 10, 1834.

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were blooming youth, and whose countenances were mantled with fairy smiles, are now grave and thinking men; and many, whose temples were adorned with burnished locks, are now sown thick with grey hairs. What a change is this for sixteen summers! But greater still, if possible, is the change in our sentiments. We grew up together believers in unending woe for millions of the human race, but to-day we are assembled to dedicate this temple to the universal Father, the Creator and Saviour of all.

On an occasion like this, I know of no subject of higher moment to the cause of Christ, or that would be of more thrilling interest to the brethren who have reared this beautiful building, than the true worship of God, or pure and undefiled religion. This will be my theme, — and the congregation cannot but perceive, that, in order to do this subject justice, I shall be compelled to come in contact with the conflicting sentiments of the day. In defending the true worship of God and the religion of Jesus Christ, I shall have to pay some attention to what passes for religion and divine worship in the present day; and shall closely examine the doctrine of total depravity, and a mysterious change from nature to grace.

It is a matter of trivial moment for us to rear and dedicate houses of public worship, unless we

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understand the character of that Being to whom we dedicate them, and the nature of that worship which he requires us to render.

There is, indeed, a strange infatuation in the human mind, in regard to religion. What constitutes the true worship of God, or true religion, is a subject which has for many centuries occupied the attention of the Christian world. The prevailing opinion seems to be, that it consists in that species of reverential homage paid to God, which will placate his wrath, secure his favor, and induce him to save his creatures from final ruin in the immortal world to which he, in the plan of creation, exposed them. It is believed by a large portion of the Christian community, that man comes into existence totally depraved, — naturally opposed to God, and averse to all that is good, virtuous, and amiable, — that though he is a moral agent, yet that moral agency consists in freely pursuing a course of sin and transgression against the moral Governor of the world, and that no one of the human family would ever be saved, unless God, by his irresistible grace, brought them to a state of salvation in Christ.

These, with a thousand minor speculations, constitute the present systems of theology in the Christian world. Though they vary in doctrine, so far as salvation may be *conditional* or *unconditional*, yet they all agree in general terms, that



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the worship of God does, indeed, consist in doing something to secure salvation in the future world by causing the divine Being to be merciful to men. Even those who hold to the doctrine of election and reprobation, nevertheless maintain, that worship is a necessary means to obtain the favor of heaven; and the preaching of every denomination among us, does certainly impress upon their congregations, that something is to be done by man to influence God to save him; and this argument is always resorted to when conversing with those, who believe that God will finally save all his creatures from sin, imperfection, death, and pain.

But we would inquire,—if God is the *cause* of all things, and we are but an *effect* from his hand, then how can the *effect* operate on the *cause*? If all the feelings of love and benevolence in the human soul are the gift of God,—if they are but an *effect* from him as the *great cause*, then how can human love and benevolence influence God to be merciful to his creatures? It is impossible, because it is a contradiction in terms. It involves the extravagant idea, that man can make God more merciful, benevolent, and kind than he naturally is. This would prove that he is not infinite in goodness. It would prove that he was imperfect, and subject to be changed in his feelings and purposes in regard to his creatures.

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Hence all worship which is calculated to influence the divine Being, or to render him any benefit, is worse than useless. It is worshipping him in vain, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.

The Creator being infinitely happy in his own immortality, unchangeable in his divine attributes and perfections, and entirely independent of angels and men; it is impossible that he should have revealed a religion to his creatures, which they were to employ as an instrument to operate on him, or change his purposes, or exalt his happiness. The question then presents itself; what was his object in making a revelation of his character and nature? I answer, for the purpose of communicating happiness to his creatures, by inducing them to imitate his perfections. And for what purpose did he reveal to us a religion? Answer, to give us a rule of conduct, so as to promote each other's happiness and welfare in the world, by inducing us to love all mankind, and do them good as we have opportunity. From a participation in these affections even our enemies are not to be excluded. In order to induce us to pursue this worthy course of conduct, God has set before us his parental character, as the model worthy of our imitation, declaring himself to be good even to the evil and unthankful, good unto all, and his tender mercies over all his works.

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He has demonstrated his unbounded love, in revealing to mankind a life of immortal and unending felicity in the future world, through Jesus Christ our Lord! He has revealed his goodness by kindling in our souls inter-mutual and undying affections for the welfare of parents, friends, and children! He has revealed his goodness in the most pleasing gratification of our senses, and elevated our souls with the sublime and immortal hope of perpetual felicity in the paradise of God! — He has revealed the goodness and also the grandeur of his character in the stupendous volume of nature. He has thrown over its fair face, variety, beauty, and delight; and sketched the broad landscape with consummate skill! He has made the grove vocal with melody, and the distant woods resound with the wild songs of animated nature. He has poured profusion over the face of the globe we inhabit, and presented for our contemplation, the countless exhibitions of his love and mercy. Wherever we turn our eyes, we behold the lessons of our Creator's love, inviting us to check our ingratitude and madness, and to be kind one to another, even as he is kind to us.

True worship, then, does not consist in that homage which is rendered to God to make him merciful and kind to his creatures, or to placate his wrath, or to induce him to save his offspring from his own vengeance; but, on the contrary,

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it consists in an humble endeavour to imitate the goodness of our Creator, which we see manifested in the countless exhibitions of his love to man, both in the volume of nature, and of revelation. We must possess the temper, and follow the example, of Christ. This will be imitating God. It will be worshipping him; for the Saviour shadowed forth the character of his Father, and so exactly imitated him, that he was the express image of his perfections. Yes, he was in all his feelings and conduct so like God, that he exclaimed, "He that hath seen me, hath seen the Father also."

Worship, then, does not consist in striving to obtain the divine favor, because that favor God exercises towards all; and has manifested it in nature and revelation. Neither does true worship consist in causing him to love his creatures, because he loves all, and has manifested this love in the gift of his Son. God so loved the world that he freely delivered up his Son for us all. "In this was manifested the love of God towards us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins." Neither does true worship consist in striving to obtain salvation in the future world, because we were saved according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in in Christ Jesus before the world began. But the

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genuine worship of God consists in feeling the bursts of gratitude and veneration for his favor and boundless love in having secured our salvation from sin, and our everlasting happiness in his immortal kingdom. These devotional feelings will induce us to love our brethren of the human race, and, in imitation of our benevolent Creator, to do them good and that continually.

We now see the propriety of our text, "If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar." The reason why he is a liar, is, because the loving of God consists in loving and doing good to our fellow-creatures, the same as God loves and does them good continually. We must imitate God. If we do not, his love has no abiding place in our hearts. The Scriptures declare, that if we love God, we will keep his commandments; and his commandment is, "Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you and persecute you, that ye may be the children of your Father in heaven; for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth his rain on the just and unjust." The rain and the sunshine on the evil and the good, were not the blessings Jesus here intended. He did not come to inform mankind, that the sun shone and the rains poured on all; but he held up these to prove the universality of the love

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of God; and on this ground he commanded them to love all, even their enemies, that they might be perfect, as their Father in heaven is perfect.

Perhaps it may be said, that to love our brother, means a member of the same church, or at most the Christian. This is not correct. "If ye love them that love you, what reward have ye; do not even the publicans the same?" We will now prove, that it means any one of the human race. That the Jews, God's chosen people, were all his children, and consequently brethren, cannot be denied. It is immaterial whether they were converted or rebellious, they were still denominated the children of God. He says, "I have nourished and brought up children, but they have rebelled against me." Here he calls the rebellious his children. But why were they called the children of God? Because they were the descendants of Abraham, who was the father of the promised seed, and with whom the *first* covenant was made. They were the children of the covenant, to whom pertained the glory, the promises, the giving of the law, and the service of God, to the exclusion of other nations.

In the same scriptural sense, Jesus Christ was the head of every man in the *second* covenant. He, by the grace of God, tasted death for every man; revealed the love of God to all; broke down the middle wall of partition between Jew

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and Gentile, to make in himself of the twain one new man; and the promises of God in him are, not yea and nay, but yea and amen. "He was not ashamed, therefore, to call them brethren; saying, I will declare thy name unto my brethren." Here, then, he called them brethren before he declared God's name to them, and they, certainly, at that time, could not have been Christians. Again, "As the CHILDREN are partakers of flesh and blood, he himself likewise partook part of the same," &c. The *children* here mean all, who are partakers of flesh and blood. And if *children*, they must have one common Father, and of course all be brethren. Jesus Christ says, when ye pray, say "Our Father which art in heaven." Hence it must be certain, that they were his children before they prayed; otherwise they could not say in their first prayer, "Our Father." Paul says to the Athenians, (who certainly were unconverted heathen,) "forasmuch as we are his offspring." But why multiply arguments, when it is absolutely declared, "there is one God and Father of all." We have, therefore, proved that all, under the *second* covenant, are the *children* of God in the full scripture sense of the word, as much so as the Jews were his children under the first covenant. If we are children and have one father, then are we all brethren. In perfect agreement with this, Jesus commands us to love our enemies,

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that we may, in conduct, as well as in relation, be the children of our Father in heaven.

Now, if we hate one of the human race, we hate a brother; and it is immaterial what our professions of love to God may be, we are liars; for if we love not our brother whom we have seen, how can we love God whom we have not seen? He who sincerely loves God, will certainly be actuated by the same spirit, imitate the divine Being, and obey his commandments. It is impossible to love God without loving his rational creatures. It is impossible to worship and serve the living God, but by discharging the various duties we owe to mankind. To discharge these duties is obeying his commands and serving him out of a pure heart and love unfeigned. It is worshipping him in spirit and in truth.

Hence we perceive, that the religion of the present day is any thing but the religion of Jesus Christ. It consists in believing certain creeds and confessions of faith, in experiencing certain mysterious changes and frames of mind, and in having so much to do for the Lord, that they have no time to do any thing for their fellow-creatures. It consists in converting men to the belief of a doctrine, joining a church, exhorting in public, praying in the family night and morning, whether they feel devotional or not; saying grace at meals; reading, perchance, a stated number

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of chapters, each day, in the Bible, and doing many such things for God; expecting, however, to be well paid for the task in another world, — something like being *hired* to serve the Lord, which some declare they would not do, if they were Universalists, because they could then obtain eternal life as a free gift of God, without serving the Lord so hard for it. Meetings are sometimes attended night and day, from four to twenty days in succession; while perhaps honest creditors are suffering for their just dues. This is not only called *religion*, and the genuine *worship* of God, but being zealous for the Lord, — doing much for him and his cause in the world. He who does all *this*, is honestly considered religious. He may hate the men of the world, and even slander the reputation of those of other denominations, if he will only love the brethren, which, in orthodoxy, means none but the members of his own church and denomination. He must manifest his charity by loving those that love him, and believe as he does; and by calling Universalists Deists, Infidels, and blasphemers, and by showing them no favors. He may even manifest holy wrath towards them; and carry the stern, unrelenting motto in his forehead, "Break them down if you can, ruin their reputation, and blight their dearest prospects in life; the end justifies the means." He may jockey them and the

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world's people, by taking every advantage in trade, and making a good bargain; if he will only pay well into the treasury of the Lord.

But is this, indeed, the religion of our Saviour? Is this the worship of God, for which churches are dedicated to him? We again say no; but to worship God is to discharge all the duties which Christ recommends in the Gospel. In no sense can God be worshipped but by making ourselves and our fellow-creatures better and happier. All worship must have reference to human improvement and happiness. Its object is to enlighten the understanding, to regulate the passions, — to refine and elevate the affections, — to expand and brighten the mental powers by studying God and his works, — to reconcile the mind to the administration of his government and to the revelation of his will, and thus raise man to the true moral grandeur and dignity of his nature. This is the worship of God. It is not to chain the mind down to a dark, exclusive, and mysterious creed, only calculated to mould man, "the noblest work of God," into a sour, sanctimonious, inhuman bigot, who dreams that worship is an act by which the Deity is to be influenced to be merciful to his creatures; and made to interpose in behalf of their final salvation. God is not only unchangeable, but he cannot be benefited by the righteousness, nor injured by the sin, of man. The Scrip-

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tures say, — "Look unto the heavens and see, and behold the clouds which are higher than thou. If thou sinnest, what dost thou against him, or if thy transgressions be multiplied, what dost thou unto him? If thou be righteous, what givest thou him? or what receiveth he of thy hand? Thy wickedness may hurt a man as thou art, and thy righteousness may profit the son of man." Here we perceive, that our sins cannot in the least injure our Creator, nor disgrace him, nor sully his perfections, nor in any sense diminish his happiness. Sin can only injure ourselves, and our fellow-men, by destroying our own internal peace, and their external comfort. Nor, on the other hand, can our righteousness add to his divine glory, or in the least augment the infinite happiness of the Supreme Being. It can only be profitable to men by increasing and extending their happiness, peace, and joy, and thus lighting up the smile of friendship and contentment in the abodes of men.

This is worshipping God, — this is reverencing his name, — this is serving the Lord, — this is praying without ceasing in the desires of our hearts for the advancement of human happiness, and the glory of the Lord among men. This is all the worship God requires of us. When Christ was predicting his coming at the destruction of Jerusalem, he did not say he would in-

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quire how much they had served God by praying and exhorting in public, and constantly attending meetings by night and by day, even to the neglect of the duties of life, — but this he declared should be the test by which the true worshipper should be known, — "I was an hungered, and ye gave me meat; I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink; I was a stranger, and ye took me in; naked, and ye clothed me; I was sick, and ye visited me; I was in prison, and ye came unto me." And on inquiring when they had ever done all these things to him? he replies, — "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me." Here the Saviour teaches us, that to discharge all the duties of benevolence, love, and humanity which we owe to mankind, is in reality worshipping God. It is doing it to the Lord, — and I do say, that there is no other worship that can be rendered to God. Of himself he needs nothing at our hand; for man cannot be profitable unto God, neither does his goodness extend to the Lord. Even if we pray, it is not to change the Almighty, but to improve our own hearts and the hearts of others, so that they may be softened towards one another, reconciled and elevated to God, and thus more and more prepared to be useful and happy in the world. If we are sincere, we shall have our petitions. If a man sincerely pray, that he may

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lead a quiet and peaceable life, it will be his desire to do it, otherwise he is a hypocrite. If he pray, that the wants of the poor may be supplied, he will do his duty towards accomplishing it. If he pray that discord, slander, and envy may cease, then he will injure no one by such vices. If he do, his prayer is a mockery to God. If he pray for his own growth in knowledge and virtue, he will strive to promote it. If he pray for all these blessings before a congregation, he desires through this medium to soften their hearts before God, and thus influence them to discharge the Christian duties of life with cheerfulness. This is genuine religion. This is serving God. But all worship, which is intended to make God merciful to his creatures, and save them from his own vengeance, is spurious and vain. It is such as heathens offer to propitiate their gods.

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# SERMON XXX.

## DEDICATION AT AMSTERDAM, N. Y.

[Concluded.]

FROM what has been argued, we perceive, that there is but little of true religion in the world. A mysterious change from nature to grace has, therefore, no foundation in the teachings of Christ. It is an invention of man, which has been handed down in the religious creeds from father to son, ever since the days of Calvin, the thundering reformer of Geneva, so that the impression has become general that this is, indeed, the religion of the Bible. Those who honestly believe in experiencing this change before they can be Christians, cry down morality as good for nothing at all to sustain them at the bar of God, while this mysterious change, — this frame of mind is all sufficient in life, in death, in eternity. Now, my friends, it is exactly the reverse of this. A belief in God, and in the divine mission of his Son, and a conscientious discharge of the duties of life, — in one word, a sound morality, is all, and a mysterious change is nothing, having not the slightest foundation in reason or revelation. To love our fellow-creatures as our text teaches, and to do them good, is all that God requires of us.

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"For what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, love mercy, and walk humbly with thy God?" This is not only the whole of his requirement, but it is vital religion. "Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, to visit the widow and the fatherless in their affliction, and keep himself unspotted from the world." This is not only the whole requirement of God and pure religion, but it is the whole duty of man. The Scriptures say,—"Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter,—fear God and keep his commandments, for this is the whole duty of man."

Now it is certain, that all these things are done by thousands, who have never met with a mysterious change, who never made a profession of religion, and never thought they were religious, because the church did not consider them so. Too many of those, who doat so much upon this mysterious change, and upon what they profess to have experienced, think they may hate and slander their fellow-creatures, feel uncharitable towards other denominations, and be what we should call immoral, still, it is no harm in them because they have experienced religion! But this is a most unhappy delusion. Less than three hundred years ago, this very class of Christians sincerely believed, that it was doing God service

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to torture and burn all who differed with them in faith.

All are now sensible, that such were not only destitute of religion, (though they had experienced the same mysterious change,) but that they were unmercifully wicked. And the day has dawned when men will learn that such changes, and frames of mind, as many now experience, are nothing at all, so long as they fill the mind with bigotry, envy, and hatred towards any denominations of Christians.

Having probably said all that is necessary in defence of the religion of Jesus Christ and of the true worship of that God to whose service we dedicate this house, we will now take hold of the doctrine of total depravity, and prove, that a mysterious change from nature to grace is not true. Before we grapple with this strong hold of orthodox faith, we would caution you to bear in mind, that the expression, "from nature to grace," is not in the Bible.

The reason why such a change is supposed to be necessary, is, because they contend, in the first place, that man comes into existence totally depraved. Now if this were true, then I readily grant that such a change would be necessary as a prerequisite for the enjoyment of happiness in virtue. If, then, we succeed in proving that man,



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in a state of nature, is not totally depraved, our point is gained.

We will first state what we are to understand by total depravity. It is to be born into existence completely averse to all that is good, and wholly inclined to all that is evil; — so that we can neither speak a good word, think a good thought, nor perform a good action acceptable to God; that it is just as natural to do evil as for water to run downwards. In fine, that it is our nature to do wrong. In this state no man, however moral, is considered in a better condition for immortal happiness than the most abandoned or profligate wretch, because all he does is out of mere selfishness. But, after a man has met with this mysterious change from nature to grace, even though he is not so good as the moral man, he is still acceptable to God, because what little good he may do, is for the glory of God, and not out of selfish motives.

We will now bring this doctrine of total depravity to the test of reason and revelation. — The fish in the water is happy in that element, and would die were he to be brought into the air without changing his nature. It would be no favor to the fish to be converted into a bird by some mysterious change, neither would it be any favor to the bird to change its nature into a fish so as to be happy in the water. Each is happy

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in its own element, because that element is perfectly adapted to its nature. — Now, if man is brought into existence totally depraved, and in a state of nature perfectly fitted to do evil, then sin is his element, in which alone he can be happy. How then can man be punished in sin, with the horror of a guilty conscience? Impossible; because sin, on this principle, must be his delight, his peace and joy, out of which he could not be happy. We then inquire, why do the Scriptures aver, "there is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked?" If men are totally depraved, then the Scriptures ought to declare that there is no peace to natural men in working righteousness, but there is great peace in doing wickedness, because it is their nature.

The bird does not die by being in the air, but would if it were put under water. So if sin were man's nature, he could not morally die in sin, because it is his element. He would die, that is, lose his enjoyments, in righteousness. In this case the Bible ought not to declare, "ye are dead in trespasses and sins," and alive in righteousness. No, — but ye are dead in the practice of holiness and alive in trespasses and sins, because it is your nature, your element, to do wrong.

Again, what sense or propriety is there in exhorting men, totally depraved, to change themselves from nature to grace, or to perform one

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good action? Just as much as there is in exhorting the fish to become a bird and live in the air, or exhorting the tiger to throw off his fierceness of nature, and to become a lamb. As, then, the Scriptures declare men to be miserable in sin, it cannot possibly be their moral element, and decidedly proves that they are not totally depraved. If they are, then there is no sense in calling them morally dead while in sin. The very circumstance of their being morally dead in trespasses and sins, absolutely proves, that moral rectitude is the element in which alone they can live happy, and out of which, they soon become morally dead and miserable.

Again. The Scriptures, instead of teaching that men must be changed from nature to grace, declare that they only need washing, purifying, cleansing, &c. Now if a cloth be filthy, it can be washed; but in this process, the nature of the cloth is not changed. The filth is simply removed, while the cloth is the same. And not only so, but the cloth possessed all its properties, all its intrinsic worth before it was cleansed as afterward. The filth it contracted was no part of the cloth, neither did it in the least change its nature, but only obscured its beauties. If man, then, is to be washed or cleansed from sin, it cannot exist in his nature, but must be something contracted by practice, otherwise it could not be removed.

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But if a cloth were wholly filthy, (pardon the expression,) then there would be no cloth to be cleansed. Filth would, in such case, have to be changed from its state of nature into cloth. It would be a new creation ; making that which was of no worth, valuable. Hence, if man were totally depraved, he would be of no value, and his conversion to holiness would be a new creation. There would be no propriety in those scriptures which speak of cleansing him.

Again ; — The prophet Malachi, speaking of Christ, says, " He shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver ; and he shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness." Gold, while in its ore, is of the same nature and value as when the dross is removed. But if it were all dross, it would require a new creation to turn it into gold. This is equally applicable to man. He has all his properties of natural excellence when he is born into being, and sin is but dross mixed with the pure gold, and this dross can be removed without changing his nature. Jesus Christ took up little children, and blessed them, and said, of such is the kingdom of heaven. On another occasion, he called a little child unto him and set him in the midst of his disciples, and said, " Except ye be converted and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of

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heaven." Here Christ himself, instead of saying, that little children were totally depraved, held them up as models of conversion to his own disciples, and pronounced them heirs of the kingdom of heaven. Children are in a state of nature, and have no occasion to be changed from it while in this life, if our Saviour is to be believed. As they grow up, they at times do wrong. They wander like the prodigal from their father's house, or from a state of innocency. They are in the Scriptures exhorted to retrace their steps, to return to the Lord, to become as they once were, to become as little children; and this is called *conversion*. Just so with the prodigal. He retraced his steps to the spot from whence he set out, — to a state of innocence, and this was *conversion*. But in these days men are exhorted to enter, by conversion, a house they never were in before, neither in infancy, nor in any other period of life. And this is called being changed from nature to grace. Thus we see, that the doctrine of total depravity, and a mysterious conversion from nature to grace, are at issue with the most plain instructions of Jesus Christ. Yes, at war with the whole tenor of revelation.

We have now proved, *absolutely proved*, that this shocking sentiment is *false* as it is withering to the holiest enjoyments of life, and blasting to our fondest hopes of a future, blisful, and immor-

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tal being. And on the other hand, we have proved, that a sound morality, embracing the various duties of life, is *conversion*. I mean, that morality which is produced by faith in God as the Almighty Father of his erring children, whose tender mercies extend over all; and by faith in Jesus the Saviour of the world, and an unwavering confidence in the sublime doctrines he revealed and taught to mankind. This is worshipping God, not in profession, but in very deed. This is all the change you need experience in order to be a follower of Christ, and a worthy partaker of his supper. You must guard against wearing a long disfigured face to appear unto men. You must be cheerful as is natural to you. Be open and frank in your life and conversation, — in one word, adorn the dignity of human nature.

As to these experiences and frames and feelings, they vary according to different denominations. Some among the ignorant hold to being struck down, as it were, lifeless, by the power of the Spirit. The Dutch Reformed hold simply to making a resolution to join the church and reform without any other experience. The Quaker holds, that the Spirit is a still, small voice, and moves him only at times to speak. Others think the Spirit comes, as it were, in the lightning, the whirlwind, and the storm, and moves them to shout as loud as they can scream. The Shaker

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believes, that the Spirit moves him to shake and even to dance. Others believe, that the Spirit shows them to be the vilest of sinners, and makes them so resigned to the will of God as to be willing to be damned in order to be saved. All these denominations have each their peculiar experience, all differing one from another, yet each declares, he knows his doctrine to be true by his own experience, and others to be false.

But, my brethren, as you worship in this house, remember that many spirits have gone out into the world, believe not every spirit; but listen to that still, small voice which caused the prophet to wrap his face in his mantle, and say, *This is the way, walk ye in it.* Try therefore the spirits whether they be of God. It is immaterial what the profession or experience of any may be; bring them all boldly to the criterion of our text, and by that let them stand or fall. If you see *any* man among *any* denomination hate one of his fellow-men, or strive to injure any by evil speaking, even though he professes to love God, yet you may be certain that he is a liar, for the inspired word sets him down as such.

We have now faithfully and scripturally disproved the doctrine of total depravity and of a miraculous change from nature to grace, and the fallacy of that worship, which is rendered to God with an intention to make him merciful to his

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creatures, and influence the unchangeable Jehovah to save a part of his creatures from his own vengeance, and consign the residue to immortal damnation, because they neglected the means prescribed by creeds to placate his wrath and secure his favor. To such a God and to such a worship this church is not to be dedicated. We have set before you the exalted character, and eternal and unchanging benignity and perfections, of the Divine Being; his immutable love to man and that worship which he requires. It is a worship which recognises him as the Father and friend of his erring creatures, chastising them in mercy and saving them by his free grace. It recognises him as that amiable object in whom all perfections centre, and from whom all love, goodness, order, and harmony emanate. It is a worship which devoutly and sublimely bows the soul in filial resignation to the grandeur of his laws, and to the majesty of his reign over the stupendous universe! It is a worship, which unites the soul to God, and causes it to act in union with him in dispensing good to his creatures. Breathing in his spirit, it is constrained to love all mankind, to encircle the universe in the arms of faith, and labor for human improvement and human happiness. It is a worship, which feels the yearnings of distress over the miseries of its enemies and persecutors, and rolls the big tears of grief and pain from their



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living fountain in the soul, when we discard the fond hope of meeting them again in brighter scenes. It is a worship, which moved the tender soul of Christ to weep over the temporal sorrows and misfortunes of men, — yes, to die for his enemies, and, in the overflowing compassions of his soul to pray, "Father, forgive them, they know not what they do!" It is a worship, which sanctifies the heart, through the truth; which continually opens to the soul new sources of mental felicity; which refines and elevates the affections; which gives fervor and energy to the mental powers; which baptizes the soul in its fountain, God, and brings into active operation towards our fellow-creatures every thing that is amiable and Godlike in the human character. In one word, it is to love our brethren of the human race.

The unbounded goodness of creation's Father, to whom we dedicate this house, is manifested throughout every department of nature and revelation, pouring oceans of bliss and mercy over the universe he sustains and governs. He has furnished the most admirable proofs of his unbounded goodness and parental affection to all mankind! Infinitely happy, immortal, and independent of *all*, he aroused into existence countless worlds, and peopled them with noble intelligences designed for happiness, and destined to laud his eternal praise in immortal realms of boundless bliss! He

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has given us senses susceptible of the most pleasing gratification; and powers of imagination and thought that revel in their greatness, range the universe, lift the curtains of eternity, and, on wings of immortal hope, surmount the boundaries of the darksome tomb, and soar through the regions of everlasting day? We feel a conscious power stirring within us, presaging a future world of immortal felicity in the highest heavens, where we shall meet with countless worlds of glorified beings in one amazing congregation, beyond the reach of sorrow, imperfection, and pain!

Let us, then, in view of the unbounded goodness of our Creator in such a gift as this, break off our sins by righteousness, and worship and glorify our Father in heaven by loving all and hating none. This is the worship of God which we have endeavoured to illustrate, and to which we now dedicate this house.

We dedicate it to the one only living and true God, the Creator of the universe, the King eternal, immortal, and invisible, the Father and Saviour of all. We dedicate it to the one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus, who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time. We dedicate it to his heavenly example, to his dying love, and to the Gospel of his impartial grace. We dedicate it to the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of truth; that sanctifies

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and comforts the heart. We dedicate it to Christian intercourse and communion, — to human improvement and morals, to peace on earth and good will to men. We dedicate it to Christian comfort and consolation, to the voice of friendship, and the breathings of charity. We dedicate it to the doctrine of Universal Salvation, and to those sublime and immortal hopes, that reach beyond the grave and anchor in heaven. AMEN.

THE END.

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